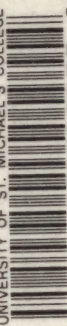


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SACRED HEART ORPHANAGE

Sacred Heart Orphanage
Toronto, Ont., Can.



SHORT CONFERENCES
ON THE
SACRED HEART

(THE LOVER OF SOULS)

BY

REV. HENRY BRINKMEYER



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✠ JOHN M. FARLEY,
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PREFACE.



FRIENDS have often advised the publication of the following Conferences. For a long time I hesitated to act upon this suggestion, as I cannot claim for them entire originality. They are bouquets of flowers gathered in years gone by from various gardens to suit my own taste, and for the pleasure and comfort of those to whom they were presented. Perhaps their fragrance is sufficient to gratify and embalm other souls dear to the Sacred Heart. If so, may the Divine Master breathe through these blossoms the sweetness of love and the perfume of grace long after he who culled them has gone to rest from his humble labors.

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THE LOVER OF SOULS.

FIRST CONFERENCE.

DEVOTIONS IN THE CHURCH.

THERE is a distinction to be made between faith and devotion. We cannot be devout without faith, but we may have faith without devotion. The doctrines of faith do not grow; they are always the same; but devotion to these doctrines may and does grow; in other words, the objects of faith are always the same, but they are not always felt, and in consequence, the same honors and the same love are not always rendered them. Thus the sun in the spring-time will have to shine many days before it is able to melt the frost, open the soil, and bring out the leaves; yet it shines out from the first, though it makes its power felt but gradually. In like manner some truth may shine out in the Church for a long time, before it is fully seized and realized and melts men's hearts into love and veneration of it. More-

over, just as the sun thaws in spring-time some particles of snow and ice more quickly than others, and causes some trees and flowers to sprout and bloom more readily than their fellows, so too, some truth may affect one soul more quickly and deeply than it does another, and though understood equally well by all, yet will not call forth equally well from all, religious honor, respect, veneration, fear or love. So you see Devotion is really "truth in bloom," and since there are many truths and many souls in the Church we must expect to see these many devotions.

And such is the case. Any large parish church will illustrate this. The edifice itself is dedicated to Almighty God, under the invocation of the Blessed Virgin, or some particular saint; but within there are sometimes three, five, seven or more altars, each of which has its particular saint or mystery to honor. The worshippers kneel here, each according to his own inclination. No one interferes with another. And as Mass is celebrated, and all follow the sacred rite, each one has his own devotions which are all more or less diversified, and though distinct, converge to one and the same God. Some associate to pray for a good death,

others for the repose of the departed souls, others finally for the conversion of the heathen and the sinner; some join confraternities to honor the Precious Blood, others the Sacred Heart, others again the Immaculate Conception. In a word, there is a variety of devotions open to individual Catholics to choose from according to their religious task, their character, their tendency, and the prospect of personal edification.

What follows from the foregoing remarks? This, that Devotion depends principally on the lucid manifestation and the profound realization of a religious truth. Truth must be presented to the mind, before it can meet with any recognition. We cannot honor and love what we do not know. The better we know a thing, and the more we see in it of the true, the good and the beautiful, the more potently can it influence us. Now, by devotion in general, we understand an ardent affection, which will show itself in outward acts when opportunity offers. Therefore, the better and the more generally a religious truth or object is understood and realized, the more ardent and the more universal is devotion for it apt to become. To be devout then, to be solidly pious, we stand in need of study

or instruction or reflection; for naturally the more we learn of religion, and the deeper we enter into it, the more firm and fervent must our devotion grow; consequently we ought always to be learning: above all by meditation and prayer, we ought to endeavor to bring religious truths home to our hearts in order to realize them; then only can we expect to obtain and foster devotion.

But you may ask: "If true devotion depends on understanding and realizing a religious truth, why is it then that the most learned theologians are not the most saintly men? See, here is a poor, ignorant man, who has never learned to read; he was neglected in his youth; he scarcely knows the Lord's Prayer by heart. There is a great scholar, a doctor of divinity. He knows the Bible in Hebrew, Greek and Latin. He has read through all the Fathers. He knows St. Thomas and Suarez by heart. He can solve almost any difficulty and talk for hours on some abstruse, mystical point of Theology. Why is it that the poor, ignorant man is sometimes exact in observing the laws of the Church, is charitable, avoids sin, and loves God, while perhaps the great doctor of divinity does none of these things?" The answer to this diffi-

culty is easily given. The learned doctor may know more of truth, but he scarcely realizes any; while the poor man may know little, but the little he does know, he realizes intensely; it has entered deep into his heart and moves him to act accordingly. Therefore, I have said, devotion depends on the lucid manifestation and the profound realization of a religious truth.

To one other fact I wish to lead your attention, one which must not surprise us if we meet with it in history or books of travel, viz.: That devotions come and go, increase and decrease, are local and universal. In the so-called *Raccolta*, or prayer book, in which you have all the prayers and acts indulged by the Popes of various centuries, in this *Raccolta*, I say, we find numbers of devotions of which we perhaps never heard before; some of them were formerly loved and revered and widely practiced, but are now perhaps passing away. For instance, at first great devotion was paid to the apostles, then followed others to the martyrs; though all along there were saints nearer to our Lord than either martyrs or apostles; but as if they had been lost in the effulgence of His glory, and because they were not manifested in external works

separate from him, it happened that for a long time, they were less thought of. In process of time the apostles and then the martyrs exerted less influence than before over the popular mind, and the local saints who were new creations of God's grace, took their place. Then owing to the religious meditation of holy men and their gradual influence upon Christian people, those names which might at first sight have been expected to enter somewhat into the devotions of the faithful, shone like stars in the ecclesiastical heavens. St. Joseph furnishes a most striking instance. It was always known that he was the foster-father of our Lord and the chaste spouse of Mary, and still, though he had so great a claim to the veneration and love of the faithful, devotion to him is comparatively of late date, at least among Christian people. When once it began, men seemed surprised that it had not been thought of before; and now they justly hold him next to the Blessed Virgin in their religious affection and veneration. Again, some saints are greatly honored in one locality, and scarcely at all in another; the reason of it is frequently that he is the evangelist or patron, the child or benefactor or pride of that particular nation or city. Thus:

St. Genevieve and St. Martin are greatly honored in France; St. Patrick in Ireland; St. Wenceslaus in Poland; St. Philip in Rome; St. Januarius in Naples; St. Anne in Canada; etc. Finally, there are popular devotions—devotions that move not only individuals and localities, but also the masses, aye, the world. Such popular devotions are abundant outpourings of the Holy Ghost, moving multitudes to love and religion, working out divine purposes, developing and protecting some divine principle or institution, or shielding from some imminent danger threatening religion or society. From time to time Almighty God lets, as it were, a ray of intense light stream in upon some truth or object of Faith, which, illuminating it, throws other truths and objects in a dark background. This truth or object, though always known, being thus prominently held up, strikes men's attention and seizes upon their affections; in this way popular devotions arise and spread: they are evidences of Divine Providence in general, and especially of God's loving care of His Church. In our century there are two such popular devotions, which evidently came from God. They are devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, and devotion to the Im-

maculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin. These two devotions should be especially cultivated because they are intended in the designs of God to answer to the wants of the age. Of the two, that of the Immaculate Conception holds of course a subordinate place; it is intended as a preparation for the other. For Jesus is obscured, when Mary is kept in the background. She has protected Him; as in His infancy, so in the history of devotion; and we shall see in a future instruction, that devotion to the Immaculate Conception protects devotion to the Sacred Heart and ministers to it.

“Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and of the knowledge of God!” Truly, He reacheth from end to end mightily and ordereth all things sweetly. Let us submit to His inscrutable judgments, and endeavor to realize all His designs; for on the one hand, God’s glory is man’s happiness, and man’s happiness is God’s glory; and on the other hand, God would cease to be God, if He sought not in all things His glory and man’s happiness.

SECOND CONFERENCE.

THE TWO POPULAR DEVOTIONS.

IN our last conference, we learned the meaning of devotion; we saw that devotion is truth in bloom, and that consequently it depends upon a clear understanding and a vivid realization of religious truth. Before concluding, we said that popular devotions are a special outpouring of divine grace, and are designed to meet some great evil or some special exigency of the times, and that there are in our age two such popular devotions, the devotion to the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin, and the devotion to the Sacred Heart; the first a preparative and a safeguard to the second. To-day we will try to learn how these two devotions meet the wants of the times and thus answer the designs of God.

What are the wants of the times? Truth and Love! because the evils of the times are what we call naturalism and concupiscence. Naturalism is the evil affecting the mind of the age, concupiscence

is the evil affecting the heart; Christian faith is the remedy for the evil of the mind, Christian love the remedy for the evil of the heart; and just as naturalism engenders and strengthens concupiscence, so faith engenders and strengthens love. Now, devotion to the Immaculate Conception enlightens, animates, and strengthens faith; while devotion to the Sacred Heart inspires and fortifies love, and just as faith prepares the way for love, so the Immaculate Conception prepares the way for the Sacred Heart. Here you have a summary of what I wish to explain at present.

I say the radical evils of our age are naturalism and concupiscence, or if you prefer the word, sensuality. First, naturalism. By naturalism is meant a denial of the supernatural. Men now-a-days believe only in the world around them; they believe only in what they can see and hear and feel, and perceive with their five senses, or what they can grasp with their intellect; they refuse to believe in a Divine Providence, in grace, in spiritual agencies, in prayer, or if they do theoretically assent to these truths, they permit them to have no practical influence upon their lives, and are more or less indifferentists in matters of religion. Again, they deny

the supernatural end of man; or if they have a belief at all in a future world, they picture it to themselves a natural world like the present, only more perfect in degree. In one word, all that which is above and beyond visible nature, they deny, doubt or practically ignore.

What is the consequence of this naturalism, this evil in the minds of men? They give themselves over to nature, they enjoy this world, they live for it and become wholly sensual. I need scarcely enlarge on this statement. Who does not know that sensuality, to speak more plainly, impurity, is already the social evil of our day, especially in our country?

The world is flooded with a literature imbued with its venom, and literature mirrors the spirit of the age. We may safely say that of every one hundred in mortal sin, ninety, if not ninety-nine, are in that state because of impurity. But leaving aside this gross kind of sensuality, was there ever during the Christian era such a love of bodily ease, of comfort? Was there ever a stronger, a more universal thirst for riches, for pleasure and honor? Is not a thing most valued only in as much as it can contribute to ease and pleasure, and serve

as a means to acquire gold, or as a stepping-stone to a higher position in life? Do you often hear it asked, how, for instance, such and such a discovery or invention will facilitate the saving of souls, or advance the interests of religion? And is it not humiliating to have to confess that even in persons called religious there is frequently so much worldly calculation when there is question of saving souls, or in general of advancing the interests of God? These two then, naturalism and sensualism, are the radical evils of the age; the remedies for these two evils are found in the devotions to the Immaculate Conception and the Sacred Heart, and the first devotion leads to the second, as naturalism leads to sensuality. Let us try to see in what manner all this is done.

We can not honor the Immaculate Conception without believing in it. What is meant by believing in the Immaculate Conception? We believe that Mary alone of all the children of Adam was conceived without sin; in other words, we believe that all the rest of mankind were born, or at least conceived deprived of that supernatural grace which Adam and Eve had at their creation, and that she alone was conceived with grace, and in-

deed, from the first moment of her existence, had all that fulness of grace which Adam and Eve possessed before they fell. By professing a belief in this doctrine, what do we affirm? We affirm at once the existence of the supernatural, we affirm that man was originally created for a supernatural end, and endowed with supernatural grace, we affirm man's fall and the necessity of man's redemption, we affirm a Divine Providence, a Redeemer, an Eternity; finally, we affirm that man must live a supernatural life in order to reach his supernatural end. All this, naturalism denies or ignores. Consequently, faith in the Immaculate Conception is diametrically opposed to the intellectual error of our age, and therefore, devotion to the Immaculate Conception is, from its very nature, apt to destroy or weaken this error, or at least to strengthen and shield men's minds against it.

Moreover, mark that we can scarcely think of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin, without thinking at the same time of her divine maternity, for the one is the reason of the other; Mary was immaculately conceived, because she was to be Mother of God. The Immaculate Conception, therefore, leads us to Jesus; devotion to it be-

gets devotion to Him; in thanking Him for His bounty to her and to us, we cannot but think of His love, His Heart! Now it is precisely devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus that is the remedy for sensualism, the second great evil of our day. This is evident almost at first thought.

Devotion to the Sacred Heart is in every sense a devotion of love. The object of the devotion is love, for the heart is the symbol of love, and we pay special honor and adoration to the Heart of Jesus, because it recalls and symbolizes His divine and human love. The aim of the devotion is to repair the injuries done to His love and to repay love with love. The effect of the devotion is to enkindle love. The Pope himself in the decree of Blessed Margaret Mary's beatification, declares it in these words: "Jesus Christ wished that the veneration and worship of His Sacred Heart should be established and promoted in His Church, in order that He might the more enkindle the fire of Charity." Our Lord Himself in revealing His Sacred Heart to Blessed Margaret Mary said: "The great desire I have to be perfectly loved by man, has made Me foresee the design of disclosing to them My Heart, and of giving them in these

latter times this last effort of My love, by proposing to them an object and a means so calculated to engage them to love Me, and to love Me solidly." But can divine love be associated with illicit love? Can the love of our Lord be in the heart side by side with the love of the world? Does not the love of God drive out the love of triple concupiscence? Is it not true, that when God takes possession of a heart, all that is not God's becomes worthless to it? Therefore, just as the devotion to the Immaculate Conception is a specific remedy for the first evil of our age, naturalism; so the sister devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus is a remedy for the second consequent evil, viz., sensualism.

Verily, we have reason to exclaim: "*Digitus Dei est hic*," "the finger of God is visible here!" Plainly it is the work of the Almighty God which wills the cultivation of these devotions, especially that of the Sacred Heart. For the heart is most of all affected and diseased; if the heart of man is good, his mind will soon be healthy too. We will endeavor to enter into the designs of God; we will cultivate, practice and promote devotion to His Heart. That we may do so the better, we will study It; we will study Its love that we may learn

how to love; we will study Its patience that we may learn how to suffer; we will study Its meekness and humility that we may learn how to find peace for our souls.

THIRD CONFERENCE.

DEVOTION TO THE SACRED HEART.

ITS OBJECT.

IN our last conference we learned that there are in our age two popular devotions, and we tried to understand the reason of their present existence in the Church. We resolved especially to practice the devotion to the Sacred Heart, it being the more important of the two; moreover, we determined to study it, in order that we might the better practice, cultivate and propagate it, and thus enter into the designs of God. In accordance with this resolution, we shall now endeavor to obtain a clear and full understanding of the object of this devotion.

St. Thomas, the great doctor and patron of theological schools, distinguishes two objects in every devotion; first, that which in a devotion is honored, adored and loved. And secondly, that on account of which said object is honored, adored and loved. The first is called the immediate material

object, and the second, the formal, incentive or causative object. Thus in a devotion to some saint, the saint himself is the material object, it is he that is honored and loved—while his virtues and sanctity are the incentive object, that is, the reason why such devotion is paid him. Now, in the devotion to the Sacred Heart, the Heart itself is the material object; it is that which is adored, honored and loved; while that which It symbolizes, namely, the love of Jesus, is the formal incentive object of the devotion, in other words, is the reason why such special homage is paid to It. We shall, then, in this conference first speak of the material object of the devotion and show what it is; in the second place, of the causative object, and explain what the Heart symbolizes.

What is the material object of the devotion to the Sacred Heart? I have just named it; it is literally the Heart of Jesus, the living, human, created, fleshly Heart of the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity: the Heart that is beating this moment in the bosom of our Lord in Heaven: that Heart is what we adore, honor and invoke in this devotion. But we ask ourselves: how can we adore that Heart? That Heart as a material or-

gan is human, It was made, It is a creature; how then can we adore It? Is not God alone to be adored? Again, honor, says St. Thomas, is offered to a person: honor cannot, strictly speaking, be received by things, it can be properly received only by persons. In like manner, prayer is offered to a person, not to a mere thing; only a person can hear our prayers, not a mere thing. The Heart of Jesus as such is not a person, It is inseparably united to Him, but It is not His adorable Person. How then can we honor and adore and pray to It? This difficulty deserves an explanation, for it is just because of this difficulty, I fancy, that some well-meaning and pious Catholics complain of not being able to acquire a devotion to the Sacred Heart.

It is true, properly speaking, honor is directly given to a person, for only a person is capable of accepting it: still we may and do frequently honor a thing on account of a person. Thus when Mary Magdalen approached the table of the Pharisee, and kneeling behind our Lord, washed His feet with her tears, anointed them with precious ointment, and dried them with her beautiful hair, it was to Him, to His person that she was giving all these marks of contrition and love. In

honoring the Heart of Jesus, we in a similar manner honor Him, His Person, and every outward mark of respect and love that we render It, we render to Himself, to His ever-adorable Person. The heart, detached from His person and without any relation to Him, would be but a mere lump of flesh, a bundle of muscles and nerves, and therefore, deserving of no religious respect; but It can never be separated from Him, even in the tomb, It was hypostatically united to Him; it is, then, because the Heart is His Heart that It is entitled to honor. Moreover, it is true, adoration is due to God alone: we can honor a human person, but we can adore none but a divine person. Still, what I have said of honor, can also be said to a certain degree of adoration. I observed that, although honor can be directly given only to a person, it can also be rendered to a thing on account of a person. Similarly, although we can adore only what is divine, we can also adore a created thing united to a divine person; for just as honor when offered to a thing is referred to the person, so adoration when offered to a created thing, is referred to the divine person to whom that created thing is personally united. Now, Jesus is not a human person, nor

are there in Him two persons. He has but one personality, and that is divine, for He is the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity, that is, of God. His body and soul are the body and soul of God, His hands and feet are the hands and feet of God, His Heart is the Heart of God. In honoring and worshipping His flesh and blood, we honor and worship the Person, namely, God; in adoring the hands and feet, we adore God; in adoring, loving and venerating the Heart, we adore, venerate and love the Person, namely, God. The divinity of Jesus Christ is the reason we adore His humanity. In praying to It, we are praying to Him, to His Person. You clearly see, I hope, how philosophically exact and reasonable all this is, and how well it harmonizes with Faith. ✓

But we may ask ourselves again: "Why honor in a special manner the Heart of Jesus? His sacred head crowned with thorns, His hands and feet pierced with nails, are as divine as the Heart which palpitates in His divine bosom." This is true; since Jesus is a divine person, everything which He has inseparably united to His divine person merits the most absolute adoration! His whole body and His soul are adorable, because they

are the body and soul of God. Still, the Heart merits a special devotion, because, if not the organ of human love, it is, nevertheless, the symbol of all love. This, the second point of our instruction, merits a brief explanation.

In all languages, both human and divine, the heart is a symbol of love. Throughout the world when men speak of the heart, they use it as a figure of love. The reason of this seems to be that the heart is, as it were, the centre of feeling. Every emotional feeling makes an impression upon it. The heart leaps with sudden joy, it trembles with fear, it contracts with sadness, it dilates with happiness, it sends the blood thrilling along the veins in moments of satisfied ambition, it almost stops beating in terror. The brain transmits its sensations to the heart, and these sensations are as manifold as are our thoughts, for the soul as long as united to the body can not think without using the brain as an organ. Some old philosophers went even so far as to say that in the present life the soul cannot love without using the heart as its organ. Hence, the Heart of Jesus was and is, if not the organ, at least the symbol, nay, more, the receptacle of His human love, of that love with which He

loved us on earth, died for us on the cross, and is loving us still here in the humble tabernacle of the altar. Moreover, it was the heart which was first formed by the Holy Ghost from the pure flesh of the Virgin Mary; it was the heart which first lived in the Infant Jesus, and sent forth into His tiny veins that Precious Blood which was afterwards poured out for us on the heights of Calvary; it was the heart that suffered most from the insults, irreverences and outrages of ungrateful men during the thirty-three years of His life; it was the heart that was sorrowful unto death during those long hours of the Passion when Jesus sweated blood from agony, when He was betrayed by Judas, when He was mocked and derided, when He was denied by Peter, when He met His Mother, when He gave John to Mary and Mary to John, when He cried out, "Father, forgive them for they know not what they do," when He exclaimed in His distress, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" It was His heart that died last, and when It died, the ransom of our Redemption was paid. The Heart of Jesus, therefore, deserves special veneration as having taken such a large share in the work of our Redemption, and as being the seat and

centre of our Lord's human love and feelings. It is a fit symbol also of His eternal and divine love. The Heart of Jesus means then, the divine and human love of Jesus. A look at the Heart of Jesus recalls His love and all that His love has done, and is doing for us; It brings to mind the blessings we have received from Him in having been created, redeemed, made a member of His mystical body, the Church, in being nourished with His flesh and blood, in being allowed to speak to Him heart to heart in the Sacrament of the Blessed Eucharist; It gives us a fuller knowledge of His science, for the love of His Heart is a wise and knowing love; It also reveals to us His humility, purity, meekness, compassion, goodness, mercy and patience, for all these moral qualities manifested themselves, thrilled, so to speak, in His human Heart.

To resume briefly what we have learned,—first: the material object of the devotion to the Sacred Heart, namely, that which we honor, adore and love, is the living, fleshly, human Heart of Jesus; secondly: the causative or formal object of the devotion, namely, the reason why we pay It a special honor, adoration and love, is the love of

Jesus, of which the Heart is the seat and symbol. It may be that all this has been a little dry and abstract, perhaps too deep: but I hope it will not prove altogether useless. Our piety should be solid and able to resist our ever-varying moods and fancies, and to effect this, we must build behind it a wall of substantial doctrine, as a strong support when sensible devotion deserts us, and temptation, perhaps, in the form of doubt assails us.

FOURTH CONFERENCE.

“THOU KNOWEST ALL THINGS.”

WE have now learned that the reason we know and love in a special manner the Sacred Heart of our Lord is because the heart is the seat of His human love and the symbol of His divine love. To study the Sacred Heart of Jesus is, therefore, to study His love. The devotion to the Sacred Heart is a devotion to love and a devotion of love; consequently, the theology of the Sacred Heart is the theology of love: in other words, the love of Jesus as manifested in Creation, in the Incarnation, in the Passion, and in the Blessed Eucharist, becomes the subject of our study and meditation, when we aim at understanding the Heart of the Man-God.

But all love presupposes knowledge. We cannot love what we do not know. We cannot love intensely what we do not know intimately. Nor can we wish a friend good whom we do not in some

measure know and appreciate. Hence, Christ's love presupposes science, knowledge of those He loves, and a knowledge of the good He wishes them to possess, as also of the evil from which He desires to save them. We will, then, as a last preliminary to the study of the love of the Sacred Heart, endeavor to obtain a clear idea of its science.

The knowledge of Jesus is fourfold, because coming from four sources. He is God, equal to the Father and to the Holy Ghost, He is in fact the Word, that is, the living expression of the knowledge of the Father; consequently, He possesses an infinite, divine knowledge. But He is also man. As man, from the very moment of His conception, His human soul enjoyed what the blessed enjoy in Heaven, namely, the vision of God; it follows, that He has the knowledge of what is called the Beatific Vision. As man, from the first moment of the creation of His soul, knowledge was infused into Him, just as it had been infused into Adam, and just as, to a certain degree, it was infused into the prophets and into St. John the Baptist while yet in his mother's womb. Thus, He has an infused knowledge. Finally, as man,

He has all that knowledge which He acquired as other men, from seeing, hearing, feeling, thinking and suffering. We see then that Jesus has a fourfold knowledge,—a divine knowledge, a beatific knowledge, an infused knowledge and an acquired knowledge. Each deserves a brief explanation; let us begin with the last.

First, He has acquired knowledge. He knew all those things which man by force of his natural reason can master. We learn from one another, we are taught by preceptors, we instruct ourselves by reading books, we reason and deduce one truth from another; if we be learned men and studious, or possess natural genius, we penetrate into the secrets of nature, and may possibly surpass the great minds that have preceded us in the walks of science. But our Lord did not learn precisely in this way; He never went to school, nor did He read books to study, nor was He taught even by angels, much less by men. Yet He exercised His intellectual powers after the manner of rational beings. He did not see with His bodily eyes all sensible objects, nor was He in every place by His human presence, still through the medium of His sense perceptions, He drew unerring conclusions by

the strength and energy of His natural intelligence. In a word, as St. Thomas says, whatever can be acquired by the natural powers of the mind, all that our Lord did acquire without being taught, by the natural power of His human intellect. Therefore, all that which the greatest philosophers, astronomers, geologists, scientists, physicians, philologists, historians, etc., can ever learn by research and study, He knew by the force of His own reason. Again, all that from which man can suffer in soul, as trials, temptations, afflictions, agonies, despair, etc., all these He knew. Not that He underwent every kind of temptation and every species of trial. He never, for example, permitted a temptation against the angelic virtue to approach Him,—but, as Holy Scripture expresses it, "He learned by the things which He suffered."

Secondly, our Lord has an infused science. There are many truths which the human mind, however strong and penetrating it may be, can never even suspect, unless it be inspired from above, or be supernaturally taught and assisted. Such truths are, for instance, the mysteries of Faith, as the Trinity, the Incarnation, Grace, etc.,

or visions into the future. No human genius can infallibly know what is to come; none could have foretold the Resurrection of the Messiah, the establishment of the Church, and the persecutions assailing it. The human mind is so weak that without Revelation it can scarcely establish its own immortality. Now, besides the knowledge of those things, which the human intellect can possibly acquire by its own efforts, our Lord had a knowledge of all things and all beings, natural and supernatural; and that knowledge was, of course, infused into His soul, for it could not naturally be acquired. By reason of this infused science, He knew every truth and every mystery that had ever been revealed to man; He knew the past, the present, and the future; He knew every angel in heaven, and every man on earth; He knew every creature, animate or inanimate, that had proceeded from the hands of God, or would yet be called into existence. He knew all that would happen to the Church and to souls till the end of the world; He knew the temptations, the trials, the sins, the virtues, the thoughts and desires, the eternal salvation or perdition of each one of us: all was unfolded before Him, heaven, earth and hell, from the beginning of time,

till eternity never-ending. Such was His infused science.

Thirdly, He had what may be called beatific science, or the science obtained by the Beatific Vision. What is meant by the Beatific Vision? It is the seeing of God face to face in Heaven. We cannot see God at present; we know that He exists, we may feel at times His presence, still we never behold Him. Even after death we cannot see Him, not even an angel can naturally see Him. It is true the blessed in Heaven see Him as really and as substantially, face to face, as we see one another, but they behold Him thus because their souls are illumined and strengthened by some special gift, which gift theologians call the light of glory. When a soul is admitted into Heaven, the light of glory first penetrates, enlightens, raises and fortifies it, and then only can it behold God as He is, just as light must enter a room before anything within becomes visible to us. In thus beholding Him, it beholds in Him as in a mirror an immense number of truths and existences, possible and actual. It does not see all things, for then it would comprehend God, and that is impossible, nor does it perceive truths in God with a clearness of vision equal

to that possessed by every other soul, for then all would be equally happy. On earth, one mind knows more, and understands more fully than another; in Heaven also one sees more in God and of God than does another, and what it sees it understands more clearly than another. Now, our Lord's human soul even on earth, before His death, was enlightened, penetrated and fortified by this light of glory; continually, even in sleep, it beheld face to face the Blessed Trinity, the Father, the Word and the Holy Ghost, and in thus beholding God, it saw in Him all realities, all that was, and is, and shall be, and what it saw in Him, it saw with an all-pervading vividness and not only in general, as it were, but in particular: each fact, each existence, each event stood unveiled before Him with all its intense individuality: in a word, it saw all things as God sees them. It is true, by infused science He knew already all realities, all things existing, the past, the present, and the future; yet He knew these things as man knows them: but by the Beatific Vision He saw and knew all these things as God sees and knows them; therefore, may we not believe that He saw them with still greater comprehensiveness and intenser distinct-

ness? For it is well said: "All other science, whatever its excellence, is unreal, superficial, shadowy, compared to the science of the Beatific Vision."

Finally, our Lord had divine knowledge, for He is God, He is the Eternal Word of the Father, He is, as St. Paul says, the brightness of His glory, and the figure of His substance; in Him all things were created in Heaven and on earth, and without Him was made nothing that was made. In Him is all light, all truth. He is God of God, light of light, truth of truth. He is, in fact, the knowledge of the Father. When we think of ourselves, we beget an idea, a thought in our minds,—this idea is in us not the mind itself,—it is not a substance, it is only a form, an accident in the mind. God the Father in thinking of Himself, of His being, also begets an idea, a thought, but in Him this idea is a substance, not a mere form, as in us, and this substance is His Son: so that in very deed, the Son is the living knowledge of the Father, He is truth itself. "O! the depth of the riches of His wisdom and of His knowledge." "O Lord! Thou knowest all things." "Let then our hearts be comforted, for in charity instructed, we know that all the riches and all the fullness of the knowledge of all

the mysteries are possessed by the Heart that loves us!"

How sweet when kneeling before the Tabernacle to say to ourselves: He knows all—all my miseries, my failings, my trials, my sufferings, my sorrows and my desires,—He can do all things, and He loves me!

FIFTH CONFERENCE.

LOVE MANIFESTED IN CREATION.

IN Christ there are two natures, the divine and the human, though He is but one person, the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity. This divine Person has then two wills corresponding to these two natures,—a divine will and a human will, and since love is an act of the will, He also has two loves, a divine love and a human love, an uncreated, eternal love, and a created, temporal love. The Heart is the symbol of His divine, uncreated love, and it is the symbol and the seat of His human, created love. We will therefore consider them in turn, beginning with His uncreated love.

Since love is an emotion of the soul, or, under another aspect, an act of the will, it cannot be seen and studied except in its manifestations, in its outward effects: deeds show the existence and the intensity of love. If we wish accordingly to study the uncreated, divine love of Jesus, we must study

it in its manifestations, in its deeds, and from its deeds judge of its intensity and worth. Now, divine love has manifested itself principally in three ways—in Creation, in the Incarnation, and in the rewards prepared for the elect in Heaven.

What profound truths are revealed to us when we contemplate the love of God in Creation. He is our Creator. Outside of His own being, there is nothing that was not made by Him. Since He is our Creator, He must love us. The act of creation is an act of the will, and an act of the will is an act of love. He created us because He loved us, and He loves because He created us. It is a circle, a blessed prison from which there is no escape. We know that God must love and does love us, but why, we cannot understand on earth. It is a mystery, and probably in Heaven itself we shall not understand; we shall sink deeper and deeper into the fathomless ocean of His love, but we shall never sound its infinite depths. We know that we are living, but what life is we do not comprehend; in like manner, we know that God is loving us, because He has created us and is preserving us, and preservation is nothing but a continued creation; but why God loves us, we do not fully comprehend,

and we need not comprehend. We will cling to His love as to an anchor, though all the rest be involved in darkness and in apparent contradictions, until He raises us up and folds us to the bosom of His love in the bright daylight of eternity.

Creation is therefore, as St. Dionysius says, an outpouring of God's love. What is the nature of that love? what are its principal characteristics? The love of God for us is an eternal love, that is, a love ancient as eternity, and a total love, that is, a love of His whole being.

First, God loves us with an eternal love; there was not a moment in that long, never-beginning course of eternity when God did not love us, and love us singly and individually. Before the world was, when He was all alone, when there was not even an angel before His throne, when there was no light and no darkness, nothing but Himself,—ever since then He has been caressing us with love. There was not an instant in that long eternity when He was not thinking of us. Holy Scripture, as well as Reason, tells us this: *In charitate perpetua dilexi te.* "With a love eternal have I loved thee." We know it is true, yet we cannot realize what eternal love means. But what a revelation it

is! what a light and what a treasure! Each one of us can say to himself: Before the world was created, before there was such a thing as time, when nothing existed but God, when He saw His own beauty and was ravished with it, and was infinitely and absolutely happy, when the Triune God, the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost were all alone, without relation to any created being whatever, even then He thought of me and loved me, though as yet I had no existence. In seeing His Word, the Son, the Father saw me, and in that very mutual love, which exists between Father and Son, and which is the Holy Ghost, He loved me. He has thus always loved me ever since He began to love Himself, that is, from all eternity! The very thought of it overwhelms us!

But this is not all: since God is eternal, He cannot change; what is eternal is immutable. "Thou art the Lord and Thou dost not change." God's love for us in being eternal is also unchangeable. Here is another mystery! Yet it is a truth as undeniable as God Himself. God's love for us can never change. We change in many ways, even in love. One day we love God more than another, one day we are lukewarm, then fervent, then again

our hearts seem void of love. It appears to us that God changes; that at times He gives more freely, loves more tenderly, draws more intensely; but the change is in us, not in God. The earth revolves around the sun, and we make the circle with it, yet all the time we imagine that the sun is moving around us; the seasons come and go, the atmosphere varies, the clouds rise and descend; we imagine that the sun shines less warmly in winter than in summer, more brightly in spring than in autumn, yet the sun itself is, as it were, immovable; day and night throughout the year it sends forth the same amount of light and heat.—So too with God. His love is unchangeable and immovable. If we love Him, He loves us; if we hate Him, He loves us: if we betray Him, He loves us still. His love for us will continue even to the consummation of its work—even to death on the cross, even though it be denied, forsaken, betrayed; for it is eternal, and therefore, independent of time. This, His eternal love, is all beautifully and magnificently typified by the human Heart of Jesus.

Secondly, His love for us is a total love; He loves us with His whole Being. The whole Blessed Trinity loves us with all Its substance and with all

Its divine perfections. The whole Divine Heart loves him infinitely to whom It gives least: and the love which It gives to one It does not take from another,—and in fact, It loves each soul as if it were the only one in the world. Yet God has His preferences; He gives to some more than He does to others. Just as in Heaven some are higher and far happier than others. All see and love and possess the same God, and though all are as happy as they wish to be, and none envies his brother or sister,—still as one star differs from another, so has one soul more power, more beauty, more science, more bliss than another. In like manner, God loves with His whole Being each one of His creatures; still He loves far beyond all others His Son Jesus become man,—then He loves Mary above others; then among the saints and angels around His throne, as well as among His children on earth, He truly loves one more than another,—He caresses some more than others with love, He has His more intimate friends even as we have ours. This is a mystery which we cannot understand on earth. Yet, not only faith, but reason itself tells us it must be thus. He is Master of His gifts, and

whether we receive much or little or nothing, we have no right to complain. But we know that He loves us with His Being as God, and that therefore the love which He bears us is the very same love with which He loves Himself, the Word and the Holy Spirit,—the very same love with which He loves His Son Jesus, the Virgin Mother Mary, and all His saints and angels. Let us try to understand, even faintly, what these words express, for if we do we shall not wonder any longer that God is so patient with sinners, and that Jesus died for souls. For, once more, what is God's love for man? It is the love of His whole divine Being,—to apprehend His love would therefore be to apprehend His Being,—to understand His love would be to understand His Being,—and who can understand and comprehend God? who can on earth even look into His face and live? "Thou canst not see My face and live," said God to Moses. Can we be astonished then, at the words of our Lord to St. Catherine of Genoa: "Oh, if you knew how I love a soul! But this will be the last thing you will know in this world; for to understand it, would kill you." Yes, for to appre-

hend and see His love, would be to apprehend and see His Being; and were we to see God on earth, we should die of love and joy.

Here you have a glimpse of the divine uncreated love of the Sacred Heart. Does it not at first almost frighten you to think that you have been loved from all eternity with such a love? How mysterious, how adorably loving God is! O would that we could die now to see that love, to love it, and to enjoy and possess it forever!

SIXTH CONFERENCE.

“THE WORD WAS MADE FLESH.”

WE have now seen that the divine uncreated love of the Sacred Heart as manifested in the creation of man, dates from all eternity, and that it proceeds from God and embraces, as it were, the whole substance of the Divine Being. Again that overwhelming love is displayed in the Incarnation of the Son of God. It is ever the same eternal and total love we have already considered; it is simple, it is pure, it is immutable as God Himself. Yet we poor creatures who do not see God, and who study His perfections successively in His works, perceive new qualities in that divine love for man, when we look at it, not only through the mystery of Creation, but also through that of the Incarnation. Each of these sublime mysteries demonstrates God's love for His creatures. Creation reveals it as eternal and total,—while the Incarnation manifests it as a generous and humble love.

We will study then the generosity and humility of the divine love of the Sacred Heart for man.

Generosity is something more than kindness, tenderness or beneficence. A kind person will assist one in distress and will be careful not to wound the feelings of another. A beneficent, bountiful person will provide for the comfort and happiness of others and will dispense his favors abundantly. But a generous person will do not only all this, he will not only give, though he receive nothing in return: he will dispense favors though at a great sacrifice to himself; he will, as it were, forget his own rights and disregard his own inclinations if he can bestow comfort upon another; he will not be repelled by the ingratitude and wickedness of those he benefits, in a word, he will sacrifice himself, his claims, his interests, and all that is dearest to him for the sake of those he loves: such are the traits of one who is not only compassionate, kind, liberal and beneficent, but who is also generous. Such are the characters of God's love as shown in the Incarnation. God is beneficent as our Creator, He continues His beneficence to us by His daily preservation and protection, He is bountiful in providing us daily with so many things over and above our

needs, and which are intended only to procure us pleasure and to gladden our hearts,—but He was infinitely generous, when He so loved the world as to give for its redemption His only-begotten Son. What need has He of us? What interest has He in loving us? Is He not complete and perfect in Himself? What beauty, what glory, what happiness does He want? Can we add to His bliss and to His unspeakable loveliness? We can receive all from Him, we cannot make any return for His bounties. Says St. Hilary most beautifully: "As no light returns to the sun, or heat to the fire, or to a perfume its sweet scent, so the Divine gifts so precious to him who receives them, are without profit to Him who gives them." But to his native nothingness, and to his incapability of making any requital to God, man has added sin, and not one sin, but vast oceans and floods of sins,—sin so cruel, so heinous, so terrible, that the mere sight of it cast the Son of God prostrate upon the ground in the garden of Gethsemane, and caused Him to sweat blood from sheer agony. And God knew it from all eternity. He saw these oceans of sin rising one upon another, He saw each and every sin in all its naked, revolting deformity, with all

its hideous and shocking circumstances,—it required all the strength of His infinite intelligence to comprehend the malice of these innumerable sins, —still His love had to be satisfied. Love, as it were, silenced His justice, it quickened His wisdom, it strained His mercy. We might say, man's sin made Him, in a measure, love man more; for He decreed to become man Himself to redeem man. Yet he knew well that even after the redemption man would go on sinning, that few would try to be saved, that fewer still would become saints, and that for those He would make saints, He would have to suffer more grievously than for all the rest. But He shrank not; love makes one insensible to wrong; love must be satisfied at every cost. He determined to save His creatures by giving up His only-begotten Son. Who can understand such love? It is so generous that it overwhelms us. If we had not God's word for it, we could never believe it. Father Faber well says: "More men are puzzled and tempted by the love of God than by any other article of faith." We may indeed exclaim with Job: "My God, what is man that Thou shouldst magnify him? why dost Thou set Thy Heart upon him?"—To resume:

God gives to man without the possibility of receiving any return,—and when man is no longer man, when he is become like to senseless beasts, and, from being a child of love, makes himself a child of wrath,—even then God loves him, and, to satisfy His own infinite justice, He becomes man, He suffers and by His sufferings pays rigorously for all He gives us,—finally He immolates Himself to save His creature. Is not all this indeed generous?

Secondly, God's love for man, as manifested in the mystery of the Incarnation, is humble. Generally humility is defined as a virtue which prompts us to acknowledge our baseness and accept the place which belongs to us. Since in God there are all rights and no defects, He cannot in this sense be humble. There can be no presumption, no excess, no insincerity, no baseness in God; consequently, there cannot be in Him what is ordinarily called humility. But if we regard humility under another respect, namely, as a willingness to be lowered, and as an inclination for abasement, because of the blessed effects of such abasement, then we must say that, without exception, God is the one who abases Himself the most consummately and the most willingly, and on this ground God is more

humble than any creature ever can be or ever will be. It was love in God to create man, but it was a humble love, for it was a condescension, an inclination towards nothing, and therefore an abasement. Especially in decreeing the Incarnation did this humility become apparent. Undoubtedly again it was love that prompted it, but a love which, as St. Bernard says, makes majesty give way; a love which is humble, and therefore, it is indeed humility, and profound humility. *Tu non abhorruisti Virginis uterum.* "Thou hast not abhorred the Virgin's womb." That womb was all holy and pure, unstained by sin, but for God to descend into it was like descending into an abyss of infinite depth. Think of the pure God putting on a human form and, consequently, assuming an animal nature, not for a day, not only for thirty-three years, but for endless ages: think of His decreeing from all eternity that in time He would unite to Himself personally a material nature, and consequently, in that nature be forever after beneath His own millions and millions of angels. And this is not yet all; think of His decreeing from all eternity, that He Himself would take upon Himself the sins of mankind, that He would be

their victim and their ransom, that He would be the despised and the most abject of men, as it were, a worm trodden under foot. If we think of all this, and consider that God as God from all eternity conceived and willed and in time, as man, accomplished all these things, must we not say that of all beings He is the one who abases Himself most consummately and most willingly, and is therefore most humble? And that humility, that willingness to be abased sprang from love. For, what is love? It is something more than mere complacency and affection. St. Francis de Sales explains its nature in his beautiful treatise on the love of God. He says that complacency is a sort of satisfaction which the heart experiences at the view of goodness, that affection is a tender sentiment which dwells with pleasure upon an object, but that love is a movement forward, an effusion and an impulse of the heart towards the object of its predilection. Love therefore of its own nature tends to union, it breaks down all barriers, it bends towards the object loved, "it unites, collects, assembles and compresses all things, reducing them to unity." God's love for man sought therefore for union with man, and by means of this union, it

sought to communicate itself to man. Now, there is no connection known to us which could be formed with man so close and intimate as this alliance of God with man in becoming man Himself. And to this unparalleled union God's love impelled Him. It was an awe-inspiring humiliation, as we have just seen: but God loved us and He became incarnate; His Incarnation proves therefore, that He loves us with a love which is humble even to the lowest degree of self-abasement.

We have now seen God's love, all generous and humble, in the mystery of the Incarnation. "I have given you an example, that as I have done to you, so you do also." We should imitate this generous and humble love of the Sacred Heart. We should be generous with God, by the practice of self-forgetfulness, self-sacrifice, self-abandonment; we should be humble by loving a hidden life, by being silent when blamed, by avoiding praise and seeking what is lowly in the estimation of the world. Love will make all things easy. "O Lord! make me love Thee, then do with me what Thou wilt! O would that I could die for love of Thee, who hast deigned to die for love of me!"

SEVENTH CONFERENCE.

“THY EXCEEDING GREAT REWARD.”

WE have studied the divine, uncreated love of the Sacred Heart as manifested in the Creation and the Incarnation. We will now consider it as shown in heaven in the rewards of the just. It is true, the magnitude of those rewards is beyond all conception; “Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man what things God hath prepared for those that love Him.” Still, theology teaches us something concerning the joy of the elect in heaven, and though that knowledge be meagre, obscure and incapable of being fully realized, it is sufficient to inflame our hearts with holy desires, and to give us another glimpse of the fathomless abyss of God’s love for man.

The essential happiness of heaven consists in what is called the Beatific Vision. The word beatific comes from two Latin words, which mean to

make happy. The Beatific Vision, therefore, is a vision, a sight which makes one happy. That vision is the vision of God. No creature, not even an angel, can by its natural powers see God. God is a spirit whose substance is so pure, so simple, so immaterial, that no created spirit can behold Him. "He dwelleth in light inaccessible." The angels can see and converse with one another, and when our souls are separated from our bodies, we also shall be able to see the angels and kindred spirits: but of our own unassisted natural powers, we can never behold the Spirit of God. To see God, a new supernatural, intellectual power must be infused into our soul; our mind must be supernaturally elevated and expanded, since new power must be added to our intellect: that enlightenment, that elevation, that expansive power which is what is called "*lumen gloriæ*, the light of glory." Consequently, when a soul crosses the threshold of heaven, this light of glory envelops it, as it were, round about; it penetrates the soul through and through, it elevates and expands the intellect communicating to it the divine power of seeing God. *In lumine tuo videbimus lumen.* "In Thy light we shall see the Light." The soul looks upon God

face to face as He is! It sees the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost with the eye of the intellect, infinitely more clearly than we see with the eye of our body the material universe around us. It beholds the Unity and the Trinity of God, yet does not comprehend Him; it beholds the Father engendering the Son, and the Holy Ghost proceeding from both, yet it does not understand. It sees His goodness, His omnipotence, His justice, His mercy, His infinite beauty and holiness, the interminable, incomprehensible oceans of His perfections, if contemplates all before it,—oceans of joy, of peace, of tenderness and love. It sees too, how God has loved from all eternity, how wonderfully His Providence has directed all with wisdom and power to their appointed end, how He blessed us when He made us endure this sorrow and loaded us down with that cross, it sees the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost bending in love towards it, and ready to clasp it eternally to His bosom. What is the immediate consequence of this vision? When the soul thus sees God in His divine beauty, goodness, and unspeakable love for it, it loves Him with all the power of its being. It cannot help itself. It is set on fire with a seraphic love; it loves

Him unselfishly, supremely, above all things. Feeling this intense love for Him, seeing at the same time this mysterious love of God for it, and knowing that it shall now possess Him forever, a new, ineffable joy takes possession of it, and thrills through its every fibre. That joy, that bliss cannot be described; eye hath not seen it, ear hath not heard it, neither hath it entered into the heart of man: it constitutes the essential happiness of heaven.

We must, however, guard against one error, which is very apt to creep into our minds when meditating upon the happiness of seeing God. And it is an error very common even among holy persons. We must not imagine that the sight of God will so absorb our minds as to make us motionless and inactive like statues, or that our happiness will be so exclusively complete, as to make us insensible to every other joy. This is certainly a mistake. It is true, the essential happiness of heaven consists in the vision of God; still the Beatific Vision will not destroy our nature. We are naturally active, we shall be supremely so in heaven. Man is not an angel, he is not complete unless he has a body with its senses. The resurrection of our body

shall therefore increase our happiness; all the natural senses shall be gratified; we shall enjoy, for instance, the charms of heavenly music. And there shall be social joys in heaven. We shall know one another there. We shall take with us our natural love for relatives and friends, stripped of everything that was inordinate and imperfect. It may sound strange, yet the Angel of the Schools, St. Thomas, teaches that even in heaven we shall have our preferences as we have them on earth. Yes, in heaven, where all is order, harmony, sanctity, stability and love, even in heaven, I say, those whom we shall have loved here on earth by reason of nature or grace, we shall love for the same reasons still, and incomparably more than we loved them on earth, and the love we shall feel for them, will be more tender, more intense, than that we feel for others, though we should see the latter to be as holy as the seraphim, and as beautiful as the archangels. For God is the author of nature as well as of grace, and grace never destroys, it only elevates and perfects nature.

We have seen so far that the essential happiness of heaven consists in the Beatific Vision, i. e., in seeing, loving and enjoying God. The souls who al-

ready enjoy the Beatific Vision, are consequently happy beyond expression: still as long as they are separated from their bodies their happiness is not yet complete. Then only will their bliss be entire and perfect, when they are reunited to their risen bodies. I do not mean to say, that the least shadow of sadness or discontent rests upon the blessed; they know that new joys are in store for them, and they desire those joys only inasmuch as God wills them: but they desire them, because human nature requires and springs from the union of body and soul. And will these our bodies be changed? Will our bodies become worthy temples of our transformed and beautiful souls? Yes; St. Paul says explicitly: "It is sown in corruption, it shall rise in incorruption. It is sown in dishonor, it shall rise in glory. It is sown in weakness, it shall rise in power. It is sown a natural body, it shall rise a spiritual body" (1. Cor. xv). First, "It is sown in corruption, it shall rise in incorruption." That is to say, our bodies at present are corruptible by their very nature, and because corruptible, they have an inexpressible capacity for suffering. Every organ, every member, every nerve of our frame is susceptible of veritable torture. And bodily pain

can be so great as to drive us to distraction. But these, our bodies which are sown in corruption, shall rise in incorruption. They shall be no longer subject to sickness and infirmity. There shall be no more disease, no more pain or anguish; no more shall the eyes weep tears of grief. Every sense shall become the source of an abundant, ever-new, and never-dying joy. This first gift is called the gift of impassibility. St. Paul continues: "It is sown in dishonor, it shall rise in glory." Yes, our bodies are sown in dishonor; like seed they are cast into the earth, and become the prey of corruption and worms. Our dearest friends turn away with disgust from that which is but a mass of putrefaction. But these same bodies shall rise in glory. That word glory, in Holy Scripture, means first, perfect beauty and symmetry of form, and secondly, a radiant brilliancy. Our bodies in heaven shall possess both this beauty and brilliancy. The body on earth may have been disfigured by birth, infirmity or accident; it may have been shrivelled with old age, or by sin it may have lost its youthful bloom: but in heaven, all these defects and blemishes of the body shall disappear. It shall be a masterpiece of God's wisdom and power.

Every member, organ and feature shall be exquisitely shaped and proportioned, without defect or imperfection of any kind, with all the loveliness and bloom of youth. The body will also shine with a brilliancy before which all the radiance of a midday sun shall pale, yet with a brilliancy that gladdens, soothes and softens as the light of precious stones. This gift is called the gift of glory. Let us follow St. Paul's revealed words. Thirdly, "It is sown in weakness, it shall rise in power." The soul has not at present perfect control over the body: the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak. The soul cannot go where it will, walls and doors impede its desires. The body is a thick, heavy, unwieldy mass of clay,—it is an obstacle to the soul's will. But the body sown in weakness, shall rise in power. Walls and doors, slabs and seals, shall no longer be able to impede its course; it shall run and not be weary, it shall move as if it had the wings of eagles, with such rapidity that its time cannot be noted, with lightning speed, it shall pass from place to place. This third gift is called the gift of agility. Finally, in the fourth place: "It is sown a natural body, it shall rise a spiritual body." St. Paul does not mean to say that

our bodies are to be changed into spirits; but this,—that our bodies, though remaining material, shall be clothed with certain properties belonging naturally to spirits. A spirit needs not food, drink or sleep, nor shall our risen bodies need these things. The sense of taste shall be eminently gratified, but not in the carnal way of eating and drinking. A spirit is invisible, in like manner a glorified body is visible or invisible as the soul wills. A spirit is by nature simple; the body shall lose its coarseness of texture, and become so refined and delicately organized as to approach the nature of a spirit. A spirit is immortal; the body likewise shall be immortal; it shall never again feel the sting of death, never again shall it be the victim of the grave. Finally, a spirit cannot become the slave of animal passion; the body also shall be emancipated from the law of sin which is now in its members. It shall war no longer against the spirit, it shall no longer burn with the impure flame of concupiscence, it shall, in a word, be totally subject to the spirit: in consequence, no more temptations, no more dangers, no more struggles, no more inordinate cravings after forbidden pleasure. This fourth gift is called the gift of spirituality.

No wonder St. Paul said so powerfully: "That which is at present momentary and light of our tribulation, worketh for us above measure exceedingly an eternal weight of glory." Behold the love of God, the uncreated love of the Sacred Heart for man! O Mary, Queen of heaven and Mother of beautiful love, obtain for us the grace of reaching heaven, that home of never-ending happiness and love!

EIGHTH CONFERENCE.

“HE DWELT AMONG US.”

THERE being in Christ two complete natures, the divine and the human, there must also be in Him two distinct and complete operations: He must have divine thoughts and human thoughts, divine inclinations and human inclinations, divine love and human love. Having studied His divine, uncreated love as manifested in Creation, in the Incarnation and in Heaven, there remains for us to consider His human and created love.

According to a general opinion, from the first moment of His conception in the womb of His Mother, our Lord had the full use of all the faculties of His human soul. His human intellect, as we have already seen, was from its creation, gifted with infused science, and since love follows knowledge, His human will was also from its creation glowing with human love. This human love mani-

fested itself in many ways, and first of all, in our Lord's private life.

In the created love of the Sacred Heart as manifested in the private life of Christ, the first trait that impresses us, is His Poverty. He made Himself poor because He loved the poor and desired their love. Real poverty is indeed hard to bear. The poor man often wants bread to sustain him, clothing to cover him, fire to warm him, a time of relaxation in his fatigues, a physician and remedies in his sickness. He has no choice,—he takes what is given to him. His life is a laborious, rough and troubled one. From early dawn till late into the night he must pursue his painful task. He does not regard weariness and discomfort, if only he can obtain work. He does not rest when he is weak; he does not complain when his hands are toil-worn and the heat is almost overpowering him; he does not seek repose as long as he can earn even a scanty pittance. He is satisfied with a hard bed, coarse clothing, poor food. He does not think of murmuring or seeking sympathy. Nor is he less patient in suffering and sickness. He is content with little; he does not ask for any special attention: and when he is left alone through the

wearry night, he utters no complaint,—when but a word of consolation is spoken to him, his heart wells up, and his eyes fill with glistening tears of gratitude. Such is veritable poverty: and such was the portion our Lord took for Himself on earth. The whole world was obliged to acknowledge Him as its true proprietor, its Creator, its God: all joy, all delight, all honor and beauty could have been His: but He renounced all to win the poor man's love. His parents were poor, and He was born poor, not even in an ordinary dwelling house, but in a deserted stable, His cradle was a manger; the breath of animals, the fire to warm Him; He was satisfied with the stall of the ox and the ass. Like a hunted beast of prey He fled into Egypt, and there in exile He was poor. He remained poor in Nazareth. He grew up a poor carpenter's son. On His youthful shoulders He carried the timber to build for His own creatures; till the age of thirty He labored in the sweat of His brow with the square, the hammer and the saw. Later on, He continued to live among the poor and was indeed the lowliest among them. He who fed the birds, suffered from hunger. He who created the sun, endured the cold. He who found a hole

for every fox of the field, had not whereon to rest His head. He who clad kings with purple, wore all His life the woolen garment woven by His Mother's hands. He who possessed all things had not a coin wherewith to pay the tribute. Deprived of all, naked and bleeding away His last blood on the cross, He was forced to cry out: "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" It was in this way our Lord strove to win the hearts of men! and why? Because He loved them: love seeks to be loved.

But there was another way by which He sought to draw all to Himself. In every sin there is pride, for in every sin there is rebellion of proud self against the will of God. Christ became man to destroy the reign of sin by being obedient to His Father even unto the death of the cross. Obedience is a death-blow to pride. Christ came, then, to teach men obedience. But how did He impart the lesson? Not only by fulfilling the commands of His heavenly Father and drinking the chalice of the Passion to its bitterest dregs! His Heart was too full of love for men, to be satisfied with that. He went further: He took no thought of the profound humiliation it was to cost Him; He was de-

terminated in His love to give them an example which would break down every pretext of pride and consequent insubordination. What course did He pursue? Of the thirty-three years He spent on earth, He lived thirty in complete subjection to the will of His creatures. Try to fathom those mysterious depths of humiliation,—they were dug by love. "He was subject to them!" He was their God and Creator and Lord, yet He was subject to them. In Him were all the depth and riches of the knowledge and wisdom of God, yet, when they commanded, He was subject to them. It was He who framed the laws of the universe and who marked the courses the stars are traveling, yet He listened to the orders of His creatures, and was subject to them. His hand it was that held them up and preserved them, His bounty it was that gave to them the light of understanding, and the power of speech; yet their directions were for Him a law, He was subject to them. Mary and Joseph knew that He was God, and that all wisdom was in Him. A trial indeed then it was to be obliged to command. Still such was their Child's will. They must command, for He would obey. His Mother called Him hither and He came; she di-

rected Him to go thither and He went. His foster-father bade Him carry this plank and He carried it,—to saw or fasten those joists of timber, and He obeyed. He was subject to them! And not only was He subject to Mary and Joseph, but to all men. He with St. Joseph hired Himself out to His creatures. He built them houses and made them furniture; He asked for their directions and followed them; He received their advice, even their reproofs; no work was too menial for Him! He was but the carpenter's son, men engaged Him as such, and He was subject to them! Whose heart is not touched when meditating on this mystery of our Lord's obedience? Remember it was all prompted by love; His Heart was consumed with love for man, and nothing is too difficult or humiliating for love.

By His voluntary poverty Jesus wins our compassion; by His obedience He gains our admiration. But love is excited by beauty,—beauty of body, of soul, of character; for beauty is a certain aspect of goodness. In its root, only the good is beautiful; for beauty arises from order, harmony, due arrangement and subjection, and that is goodness. Now, our Lord came to win the hearts of

men, and therefore He made Himself beautiful. He took to Himself, not only the infirmities of human nature, but also its goodness; He was physically and spiritually "the most beautiful of the children of men." His humanity was a lattice through which His divinity appeared. I know some authors have doubted the physical beauty of our Lord, and have fancied that there was nothing extraordinary in His appearance, that He looked like any ordinary mortal. This, however, cannot be. A perfect soul requires a fitting instrument to actuate it, that is, a perfect body; the more tender and fine the fibre, muscle and nerve, the more sensitive also is the human being to shame, the more deeply does he feel degradation or dishonor. Our Lord's body must consequently have been perfect in form and symmetry, and a mirror of the soul within. But our Lord's beauty was especially and principally spiritual. Beauty of body becomes repulsive when it cloaks a wicked soul. Christ's outward beauty all came from within. His beauty was too pure and holy to be equally appreciated by all. What Jesus was in the sight of His Mother, He was not in the sight of any other; what He was for His Apostles and intimate

friends, He was not for strangers; what He was for the just, the pure, the humble, the faithful, He was not for the unjust, the immodest, the proud and the unbelieving. Still, His character was so grand, and yet so beautifully human, that in every age it attracts and subdues the hearts of men. Holy Scripture indicates this when it tells us, that He grew in grace and loveliness before God and man. Children pressed around Him on the streets and gathered on His knees, for He was innocent and mild like them. Multitudes paused to look upon Him, as He passed; when He spoke, though His words were often severe, men felt strangely stirred and hung entranced upon His lips, and the thought entered the hearts of the women in Israel, "How happy to be the mother of such a Son!" Yes, He took to Himself our nature with all its littleness and lowliness so far as they are innocent; He was one like ourselves, a man of sorrows and acquainted with infirmity; yet His sacred character even at this distant day appears so beautiful and excellent, that it captivates all hearts and causes even professed infidels in unguarded moments, to confess that He was Divine.

One day we shall see Him. We shall con-

template His holy feet, His gentle hands, His sacred lips, His noble brow. We shall look into His blessed countenance, His loving eyes, His opened side. We shall rest our heads upon His bosom and listen to the beatings of His tender Heart. "Dearly beloved, we know that when He shall appear, we shall be like to Him: because we shall see Him as He is!" God grant it!

NINTH CONFERENCE.

‘I HAVE GIVEN YOU AN EXAMPLE.’

IN our last conference we studied the human love which our Lord showed for man in His private life. We saw it manifesting itself in voluntary poverty, in obedience to creatures, and in attractiveness and grace of person and character. The next subject that presents itself is the love of our Lord as displayed in His public life until the hour which ushered in His dolorous Passion. From His birth in the stable until He reached the age of thirty, we know very little of our Saviour, but these years of His public life are more fully described by the Evangelists, and therefore reveal to us more of the wonderful and inexhaustible love that was contained in His Sacred Heart for man.

Our Lord exhibited His love for men by relieving their temporal ills and sufferings. He healed the sick, raised the dead, restored the blind, cured the maimed, and spoke words of comfort to the

afflicted. None ever asked in vain of the Divine Physician. All that came to Him were relieved, without respect of name or degree. Even though He knew they would prove ungrateful and abuse His goodness, His Heart was never insensible to their misery. Still, it was not the intention of our Lord to remove all temporal suffering from the world: hence, we cannot very well measure the full depth of His tenderness by the assistance which He rendered to the poor and afflicted. If we would understand the intensity and magnitude of His love we must study earnestly His zeal for the salvation of souls. The more ardent that zeal, the more ardent must be His love; for zeal is nothing else than an eagerness to benefit the one loved. Since it would have been conflicting with the plans of Divine Providence to remove from mankind all temporal and bodily evils and other consequences of sin, the immense love that was throbbing in the Sacred Heart for men induced our Lord to pursue principally the eternal interests of their souls.

Now, who is there that does not admire the zeal of our Saviour for the salvation of souls? Does not every line written by the four Evangelists bear witness to that zeal? Follow Jesus through the three

years preceding His Passion. He was never at rest. Rarely do we read of His having allowed Himself a brief repose. By day He journeyed from city to city, from hamlet to hamlet. In that period there were no railroads to lend speed to the traveler, and our Lord was too poor to have a conveyance of His own. He walked over the dusty roads and scaled the stony hills, only light sandals, if any, covering the soles of His feet. When He had traveled all day in the heat of the sun, and at dusk had reached the neighboring village, hungry and spent with fatigue, it was His practice to go up into the synagogue of the place and there preach to the people. And at night He would again leave the town and retire to some solitary place, a mountain, a grotto, a garden or lake, and there pass whole hours, frequently whole nights, in prayer. During these three years of His public life, there was not a village or hamlet of Judea and Galilee, that did not receive the sublime lessons He came to teach. Wherever the people assembled, there He was found eager to dispense to them the bread of heavenly truth. In the public markets, on hills and mountains, in the open fields and meadows, out in the desert, on the roadside, from a

skiff floating on the lake, on the banks of the river, beside the well or at the gates of the city—everywhere He taught the people; and when He had thus instructed men in public, He did not weary repeating and developing His doctrines in private. Besides all this, He had no preferences; or if any, they were for the ignorant, the poor, and for children. He visits the rich and the poor, the master and the servant; He teaches the just and the sinner, the learned and the illiterate, the high and the low,—with equal zeal He labors to enlighten one or many. Whether three thousand or five thousand are hanging upon every word of His lips, or He is speaking to a few eager to ensnare Him in His words, He is ever the same zealous teacher. Mark the simplicity of His teachings. He could have thrilled the world with His eloquence and wisdom; but no, He spoke to the people in their own language, made use of homely similes, and clothed His heavenly doctrines in parables taken from every-day life. The lily of the field, the sparrow, the grass in the meadow, the mustard-seed, the birds of the air, the lost sheep, the lost drachm, the lamp, the kingdom, the vine, the city, the net cast into the sea, the fig-tree,—in a word, whatever

was apt to enlighten His hearers and touch their hearts, He employed as a means to illustrate the truth. And see with what patience He labored! We are sometimes amazed at the ignorance, the dullness, I had almost said, the stupidity of the apostles. It mattered not how lengthily and how clearly He had spoken, they frequently failed to grasp His meaning; they returned to Him again and again with the simplest questions. For example, how often our divine Lord had referred to His Passion and especially to His Resurrection,—yet He was never understood by them. Only after His Resurrection did they remember what He had so often and so clearly indicated in His touching discourses. Then again, they were so stubborn, so rude, and above all, so little-minded; even with the great example of our Lord before their eyes, they were frequently jealous of one another, quarreling among themselves who was to have the first place in His kingdom. Yet Jesus bore with all their weakness; He repeated His instructions, He acted towards them as if they were His masters, and He their servant; He knelt down before Peter who was soon to deny Him; He washed the feet of Judas who had already betrayed Him. And just here we

find that His zeal was not only ardent, but gentle and compassionate, and therefore could not spring but from a love strong and deep and tender as a mother's love. Zeal is naturally ardent and passionate; it is very apt to become harsh and exacting, and when it does not spring from a deep love, it is rigorous in judging, it grows angry at sin, and strikes against obstacles in its way. Such was the zeal of St. James and St. John when they were yet young in the spiritual life, and wished our Lord to rain down fire upon those who did not listen to His teaching. But such was not the spirit of our Lord: His zeal was as humble and patient and kind as it was ardent and exalted. When they accused Him of being the Friend of sinners, and by His leniency of encouraging sin, He answered: "I have not come to call the just, but sinners. It is not the healthy, it is the sick that need a physician." When they reproached Him with not obliging His apostles to fast, He replied: "Can the children of the bridegroom mourn while the bridegroom is with them? But the days will come when the bridegroom shall be taken away from them, (namely, when the apostles were strengthened in faith and virtue); and then they shall fast." When the

Pharisees were shocked at His eating with sinners, He related to them the touching parable of the Prodigal Son, and of the Good Shepherd who left the ninety-nine in the desert and sought after the poor lost sheep until he had found it—"I came not to execute justice, but to grant mercy!" One day, a poor creature taken in adultery was brought to Him. According to the Jewish law, one sinning thus was to be stoned to death. The Scribes and Pharisees accused her before Him who is sanctity itself. He said nothing, but bending over, He wrote with His finger in the sand. They would not, however, be put off. They repeated their question,—what was to be done with her? He rose and said: "He that is without sin, let him cast the first stone." Tradition has it, that one hoary-headed hypocrite seized a rock to fling at the culprit, but Jesus looked up, then traced a sin of the wretch upon the ground. Terrified, the man fled. Another, more daring, it is said, was about to cast a stone, but the glance of Jesus and the mysterious writing in the sand caused the missile to fall from his sin-stained hands. At last the guilty woman was alone with her Saviour. Looking upon her, He asked: "Where are they that accused thee? Hath

no man condemned thee?" Trembling, she said: "No man, Lord." And Jesus answered: "Neither will I condemn thee. Go and sin no more." Truly, our Lord had reason to say: "I came not to execute justice, but to grant mercy." Another illustration.—Nothing shows more clearly the tender, human zeal and, in consequence, the human love of our Lord, than His conduct towards Judas Iscariot. He had called him to the Apostolate; had sent him out to preach; had given him the power of working miracles; had allowed him to listen to His intimate instructions and to share in all those marks of holy friendship bestowed upon the other apostles. He had even showed him a certain preference, a special confidence, in making him the treasurer of their little society. Judas, however, was preparing to betray his Lord. Jesus knew this. His heart was full of pity for His faithless disciple. He essayed to save the wretch by signifying that He knew of the meditated crime: "One of you is about to betray me!" But Judas was not moved; he even dared ask: "Is it I, Lord?" Jesus tried again; He knelt down before the perfidious one, His grace spoke to that hardened heart while He silently washed the traitor's feet. But Judas was unmoved.

They sat at table: Jesus instituted the Eucharist, He ordained Judas priest with the rest of the apostles, and, to screen the ingrate, even gave him the Sacred Bread of life. But Judas was not yet moved. They arose, and were about to leave for the garden on the mountain-side. Jesus turned again to Judas and, to convince him that his heart was known to his God, bade him do quickly what he intended, but in words that the other apostles could not understand. That night Judas entered the garden with the band of soldiers. He approached our Lord, Goodness and Sanctity themselves, and, embracing Him, pressed his foul lips to the cheek of the Holy One. The Heart of Jesus, how it must have bled! He knew that all would be in vain; still love, though despairing, makes efforts to win the object beloved. "Friend," He said, "dost thou betray the Son of man with a kiss?"

O! pray that such zeal and love may reign in the hearts of the priests of the Church, and in the hearts of all those who spiritually or corporally continue Christ's mission on earth. "Behold the harvest indeed is great, but the laborers are few. Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest that He send forth laborers into His harvest."

TENTH CONFERENCE.

“HE LOVED THEM UNTO THE END.”

WE have dwelt with adoring wonder upon the scenes glowing with the manifestations of Christ's love in His hidden life, and again in that after-life, when He became a teacher in Israel. Let us now follow His steps through the scenes of His Passion, and see how Love can die to win for man eternal life. We know that God was not obliged to redeem the world; much less was He bound to pass through all those exquisite sufferings which He in reality did endure. It is true, the insult contained in mortal sin is infinite. Were all men to shed their blood, it could not atone for one mortal sin. Whatever be the extent of its sufferings, neither man, nor angel, nor any other creature can give adequate satisfaction to an offended God. But our Lord is more than a creature. Having united to His divine Person a human nature,—everything He does or endures in His human nature is divine,

and therefore gives infinite satisfaction, and has infinite merit. Hence, one short prayer uttered by the human lips of Jesus, one breath, one thought, one sigh, one tear, one tiny drop of blood would have been infinitely pleasing in the sight of His Father and would have been sufficient to redeem millions of sinful worlds like the one we inhabit. But love is not selfish,—it knows no measure; our Lord hungered for sufferings. "I lay down My life for My sheep—no man taketh it away: but I lay it down of Myself, and I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it up again." Why, we ask, did our Lord wish to suffer and die? why did He permit such torrents of pain to overwhelm His soul? Naturally He was averse to suffering. What then was the motive? Love, infinite love for man. The boundless love of the Sacred Heart made Jesus thirst for our love, and desire to be baptized in His own blood, that by so doing He might excite us to love. "I am come to cast fire on the earth, and what will I but that it be kindled?" And, "I have a baptism wherewith I am to be baptized; and how am I straitened, until it be accomplished." For love is what is called ecstatic,—that is to say, it goes out beyond itself. It diffuses and overflows.

It does not only what is sufficient; it passes on to the excessive.

Our Lord then suffered, first of all, in His body. The body of Christ was perfect beyond all the bodies of men; for had there been any imperfection in it, it would have been due, as St. Thomas says, either to the maker or to the material. But the maker, the miraculous maker was God Himself. He formed it, He fashioned it, all alone. And the material was the pure, immaculate heart's blood of the Blessed Virgin. It was then perfect and beautiful beyond conception. But the more perfect a body, the finer its organization, and the more delicate its fibre, muscle and nerve, the more sensitive is that body to pain. Our Lord's body was therefore tremblingly alive to suffering. See now, how He permitted His body to be treated. "From the crown of His head to the sole of His foot, there is no soundness in Him, there are wounds and bruises, and swelling sores." *Ecce Homo*,—"Behold the Man." Behold Him at the pillar, bound like a criminal, to the whipping-post, and the cords cutting into His wrists and ankles. Hark to the cutting lashes of the whips! They raise the purple welts, they tear gashes into His virginal flesh,

they make streams of blood run down His sacred body. He sinks exhausted, His knees give way beneath Him, and He hangs by the cords apparently lifeless to a felon's pillar of shame. They cut the bands and seat Him upon a mock throne, they scoff at Him and put a robe of purple about His bleeding shoulders. Then, plaiting rude thorns into a crown, they place them on His forehead and force them in with the blows of a reed. And the sharp thorns pierce that fair and majestic brow, and the crimson drops ooze out beneath them, and the silent tears mingle with the blood that flows down His cheeks and blinds His loving eyes. Surely, malice has now spent itself.—But no—they hurry Him through the streets to Mt. Calvary, they nail His hands and feet to the cross, they hoist it into the air, they pull and push it into the hole prepared for it,—it is fixed, and on it hangs the mangled, dying Saviour of the world. "I am a worm and no man, the reproach of men and the outcast of the people. . . . They have dug My hands and feet; they have numbered all My bones." Truly, He had a baptism, wherewith He was baptized: He was baptized in His own blood.

He also suffered in His soul, and far more in-

tensely than in His body. Interior sufferings arise chiefly from dishonor, ingratitude, and abandonment: our Lord suffered from all these sources. First, from dishonor. To a high, noble-minded soul dishonor is more than death: and Jesus permitted Himself to become the reproach of men and the outcast of the people. During the three years of His public life, He had gained the hearts of the Jewish multitude. His miracles had won for Him respect and veneration as a prophet and messenger of God. Throngs were ever following, in love and awe, His footsteps. His power had never yet been known to fail; His bitterest enemies could justly impute no fault to Him, His sanctity was acknowledged everywhere, His wisdom respected and men were disposed to look upon Him as the Messiah and one of the sons of God. All at once a revulsion took place. He was captured and bound, He appeared wholly unable to defend Himself. He was ignominiously treated, buffeted, even spit upon. He seemed powerless before the storm. He was accused of being a blasphemer, a glutton, an impostor, a seducer of the people, and He said not a word in His defense. Even when they treated Him as a fool and mocked Him publicly in

the streets He opened not His mouth. He was led as a lamb to the slaughter. He bore his own cross, no angel was permitted to share His weary burden. He suffered an agony as ordinary mortals do. Angry voices asked: "If He is so wise, so great, so holy, why does not Heaven help Him? Behold how He bleeds, how He suffers, how He dies!" And men turned away from Him, mocking and deriding Him, and laughing at their former fears. Truly could He say: "I am a worm and no man!"

He suffered from ingratitude. Ingratitude cuts like a two-edged sword into the heart, and if there ever was a human heart lacerated by an ungrateful world, it was the Heart of "the Man of Sorrows." Think of the countless deeds of love He had wrought for that people,—how He had instructed them day after day, and night after night; how He had healed their afflicted and raised their dead, how He had multiplied His miracles and revealed to them the brightness of His divine sanctity, yet, like fiends, they cry: "Crucify Him, crucify Him! We do not wish Him for our king. His blood be upon us; nail Him to the cross." Think of the traitor Judas! How Jesus Christ had loved him;

and still this villainous apostate barter away his God and Master for thirty pieces of silver. Again, Simon Peter, whom our Lord had chosen as the Head of His Church, whom He had instructed more carefully than the rest, whom He had warned and for whom He had prayed, whom He had just ordained a priest, whom He had united to Himself at the mystical supper of the Eucharist,—Simon Peter denies His Master at the word of a weak servant-girl. And oh! what sources of grief overwhelmed Him at thought of those innumerable souls who will damn themselves knowingly and freely, thoughtless of all that their Redeemer has suffered. Hanging on the cross between heaven and earth, with all the agony of death upon Him, Jesus looks out into the future and sees their guilty souls. How His Heart must have sunk with anguish at the sight of the generations of men, who, heedless of all that He had done, and of all that He had suffered, would yet trample upon His blood and fix their destiny in hell. What marvel, that in the Garden of Gethsemane, blood oozed in agony from His every pore!

Finally, He suffered from abandonment. Listen to His cry. He had given up all He had.

His reputation was gone. His disciples had left Him. His Mother was there, but He had consigned her to St. John, to be the Mother of men. One consolation seemed to be left for Him in the extreme agony which He was enduring, viz.: the thought that He was pleasing to His Father, and that His Father was with Him. But no, even of that joy, even of that one consolation He deprived Himself. See Him on the cross; He lifts up His head, the drooping eyes are cast to heaven, an expression of intense agony passes over His dying face, and the quivering, agonized lips cry out: "My God! My God! why hast Thou forsaken Me?" Poor Jesus! He holds back every consolation from His soul; He deluges His broken Heart with every grief the human heart is capable of knowing, and then, when He has exhausted the chalice of suffering, He bows His head and dies with all the justice of the Father upon Him, as the innocent victim of a guilty world. What could He have done that he did not do to prove to us the love of His Heart? Can we think of so much love and not love in return? "If any man love not our Lord Jesus Christ, let him be anathema! The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you!" Amen.

ELEVENTH CONFERENCE.

THE MEMORIAL.

ACCORDING to Clement XIII., one of the aims of the devotion to the Sacred Heart is to inspire us with love for the Blessed Eucharist by recalling to our minds the unspeakable love which instituted it. The divine Sacrament of the Eucharist has been called the last effort of the boundless love of our Saviour for man. It may be considered under four heads: first, as a Memorial; secondly, as a Sacrament; thirdly, as a Sacrifice, and fourthly, as the Real Presence.

Every tabernacle is surmounted by a cross, because the Blessed Sacrament is a blessed memorial of our Lord's Passion and death. "As often as ye shall eat this bread and drink this chalice, ye shall show forth the death of the Lord until He come." Why? First, because it was given as a parting gift on the eve of the passion, and secondly, be-

cause it contains our Lord and perpetuates Him as the Victim of the Cross.

In the first place it was given as a parting gift. Let us recall the touching episode of the Last Supper. Jesus and His apostles are seated at the table for the celebration of the Paschal solemnity. It is the last meal they are to take together, for He is about to leave them. They have lived in His company for almost three years. He has been the kindest of masters and truest of friends, and now He is to part from them. Their hearts are filled with sorrow. Our Lord is sorrowful too. He knows how they will miss Him. He knows their weakness. "You shall all be scandalized in Me," He says to them. Every farewell makes a pathetic scene. He is going to meet death; to-morrow evening at the same hour He will be in His grave, and they will have shamefully forsaken Him; their head and chief will have even thrice denied Him. Jesus foresees all this, yet He will not cast them off. "Having loved His own, He loved them unto the end." Even in those last hours of His life, when His soul is sorrowful unto death, He will give them a token of His undying love. He will give them a pledge of affection which shall

compel them to remember Him. A death-bed gift is always a precious gift, more especially if it be a souvenir to which the heart of the dying one clings, and around which entwine all the tenderest memories of the dear departed one. What gift will He bestow in that last hour? The Father had so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son. What will the Son bequeath to us,—He who is not only God, but also man, whose kind human Heart with all its human love is shrinking from the impending separation, and bleeding to leave those He loves alone, like poor sheep scattered without a shepherd? “My delight is to be with the sons of men!” “O Lord,” we may exclaim, “abide with us. The greatest gift Thou couldst bestow would be Thy lasting presence in our midst! Alas! that cannot be since Thou art to die and return to Thy Father. But lo! Thy loving pledge we hear: ‘I am with you all days, even to the consummation of ages.’”

Yes, love makes all things possible,—His presence amongst us is indeed the gift He is about to confer upon His children. He is to die, and yet to remain living amid these scenes until the end of time. Listen to His words: “I am the living

Bread that came down from heaven. . . . Who-soever eateth Me, the same shall live by Me. . . . Take ye and eat, this is My Body. Drink ye all of this, for this is My Blood." And then He adds: "Do this; do as you have seen Me do. You also take bread and wine and consecrate them into My Flesh and My Blood, and do this in memory of Me." And, "As often as ye shall eat this bread and drink this chalice, ye shall show the death of the Lord till He come!" O Lord, is it possible? is such Thy dying gift? Ah! yes, we too shall be Thy guests. Blessed be Thy holy name! This very morning we have gathered at Thy Banquet. Thou hast fed us as Thou didst feed Thy apostles and disciples, and Thou art still as truly, really, and substantially present here, as Thou wert that blessed night with Thy chosen ones in Jerusalem's "upper room."

The Blessed Eucharist is a Memorial because it is the parting gift of our Lord to the apostles and to us. But it is also a Memorial because it contains our Lord as the Victim of the Cross; it perpetuates Him, as it were, in that state. How does it do this? We shall have an opportunity of studying this more profoundly, when later we con-

sider the Blessed Eucharist as a Sacrifice. For the present, let us dwell upon one or two ways in which it perpetuates amongst us the Victim of the Cross. First of all, that Victim was silent. It had been prophesied of Him: "He shall be dumb as a lamb before His shearers and He shall not open His mouth." He was reviled, but He did not revile; He suffered, but He threatened not; He was cursed and blasphemed, but He cursed not His guilty blasphemers. And when He was dead, His ears did not hear the wails of His Mother and of the women, His eyes did not see the tears of the dear ones around Him; a corpse feels not, hears not, speaks not. Such is the state of our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament. He speaks not. Of course, no one doubts that He could speak miraculously, if He chose, but day and night there reigns perpetual silence in and about His tabernacle. He never breaks the stillness around His altar throne. In many a church and chapel He remains a whole day, sometimes a whole week without receiving the homage of a single heart, but He utters no complaint. In some churches,—let us blush to acknowledge it,—He is neglected, His tabernacle is enveloped in dust, yet no murmur falls from His

sacred lips. He sees His children frivolous and irreverent even during the celebration of the divine mysteries, still He does not rebuke them. He beholds some before His very face polluting their souls with mortal sin, but not a word of indignation escapes Him. The unworthy communicant approaches, opens his sacrilegious lips, receives Him and hands Him over to the demons of sin in his Judas-like soul: but Jesus is silent, except perhaps for a whisper of reproach breathed to that conscience stained with the infamous crime committed against His patient, long-suffering Lord. It is night; all is peaceful in the church; the little lamp alone sends a few trembling rays of light into the dark aisles. Suddenly the gates of the church are forced asunder by lawless, ungodly men. The tabernacle door is ruthlessly opened, the ciborium seized, and He is made a mockery of, He is cast upon the floor, He may be trampled upon amid diabolical laughter, and then He is left alone to be wept over in anguish by His angels, His priests and His people: but He is silent, for He is none other than the Christ who died on Calvary, the ancient Victim of the Cross.

Again, as man Jesus was, until His Passion, the most attractive and the most beautiful of the children of men. But behold Him on the cross, behold Him dead in the arms of His weeping Mother. All His beauty has departed, the light has vanished from His sacred brow. Was ever a body bruised and rent as His? His face is disfigured with welts and blots of clotted blood, ashy, pale and haggard beyond description because of the terrible agony He has endured. His whole body is disfigured by cruel blows, by piteous falls, by lash and scourge, by hunger and thirst, and by the sharp wind blowing that day over the Mount of Sacrifice. The words of the Prophet Isaias have found their fulfillment: "There is no beauty or comeliness in Him, and we have seen Him, and there was no sightliness in Him that we should desire Him. . . . He was despised and the most abject of men." Poor outraged Jesus! Now glance at the Blessed Eucharist and behold Him there. Where is His beauty? Where His strength? Where His awful majesty? Where the splendor of His glory? He is under the species so small that I carry them daily in my hand. He is so concealed that He does not show

the form of a human being. At the foot of the cross in the arms of Mary, we do not see His divinity, we see at least His body,—mangled, horribly disfigured, it is true,—still it is His body. But here He cannot be seen at all. We perceive a little white veil, nothing more. Faith alone has power to penetrate the folds of that veil. O silent Dweller of the tabernacle, Thou art indeed a hidden God, Thou art here, more than ever, the Victim of the Cross!

My dear friends, when we look at the Blessed Sacrament, let us recall that pathetic word of our Lord, "Remember Me!" Let us reflect that it is a Memorial of the greatest sorrow men ever witnessed, a Memorial of the greatest pain a creature on earth ever endured, a Memorial of the tenderest, most faithful, most unselfish, most heroic love the world shall ever know—the last gift of a Heart that fears to be forgotten. Oh, yes! Lord, we will remember Thee! "May my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth, and my hand wither and rot away, if I should ever forget Thee!"

TWELFTH CONFERENCE.

THE BREAD OF LIFE.

IT is an axiom admitted by all that love ever tends to union. This springs from the very nature of love; for love is nothing else than an effusion and an impulse of the heart by which it tends to the being loved. We naturally desire to be with those who are dear to us, and when we are obliged to separate from them, our inmost being seems, as it were, torn asunder, and tears involuntarily spring to our eyes. And when again we meet dear friends from whom we have been long parted,—when a mother, for example, meets her child who has been far away, does she not eagerly fly to clasp him to her bosom? Love, then, essentially tends to union, first of all to a spiritual union, though of actual presence. Consequently, since the Sacred Heart is consuming itself with love for man, it has devised a means to be united to man. Oh! how admirable are the

artifices of Christ's love! Behold that union marvellously and sweetly effected in the Blessed Sacrament.

In receiving the Holy Eucharist, Jesus is united to us. That is the first effect and the first aim of Holy Communion. And that union is of the closest possible nature. No earthly alliance is comparable to it. Men may love one another on earth, but their souls are ever separated. Heart cannot melt into heart. But in the Holy Eucharist there is nothing, absolutely nothing between the soul of Jesus and our own: our soul rests on His. The most intimate material connection known to us is that existing between us and our food. It becomes our flesh, our blood, our bone. It becomes part of the heart with which we love, and part of the brain with which we think. Similarly, in Holy Communion Jesus unites Himself so intimately to us, that He lives in us and we in Him: "He who eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood, abideth in Me, and I in him." But there is a vast difference: we absorb our food, it changes into us. The reverse takes place in Holy Communion; here the stronger life absorbs the weaker,—our being is transformed into His, not His

into ours. I do not mean to say, however, that the substance of our soul is changed into His, but His life, His spirit, His virtues, His divine inclinations enter into our souls. "I live by the Father: he that eateth Me, the same shall also live by Me." Mark these words, "The same shall live by Me"; and these others, "He who eateth My flesh. . . . abideth, remaineth in Me." These utterances indicate something more than a transitory, temporal union with Jesus,—they point out a permanent union, a continued indwelling of our Lord in the soul that has eaten His flesh. How can this be, since it is certain that the Body and Blood of Jesus leave in a few moments after our reception of Holy Communion? Some theologians explain this by saying that even after the Body of our Lord disappears, which takes place as soon as the outward appearances of the bread undergo a change,—that even then, though the Body is gone, His adorable soul remains and continues the real union which was contracted when we received the flesh and blood, the soul and the divinity of Jesus. Try to understand this,—it is a most beautiful explanation of the words of our Lord: "He that eateth My flesh . . .

abideth in Me and I in him"; and these others, "He that eateth Me, the same shall live by Me." And again,—when we receive Holy Communion we receive the living flesh and blood, the human soul and the divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ. His flesh and blood are with us but a short time, a few minutes; for as soon as the species, that is, the appearances of bread are changed,—the flesh and blood are no longer there. Yet, according to this teaching the human soul of Jesus remains, and remains united to our soul in all reality. It penetrates into the depth of our being, it penetrates the deeper, the more fervent our Communion is, and it will not leave us entirely unless we fall into mortal sin. Our Divine Lord's blessed soul takes possession more and more of our whole nature, speaks with our lips, thinks with our brain, and moves in all our actions. In proportion as our old human life disappears before His influence, human views and feelings grow less, and the thoughts and desires of Jesus are substituted for them. Instead of the love of ease comes the thirst for suffering; instead of selfishness, a devoted zeal, instead of indifference, a tender piety like that of Jesus, who lives

more and more completely within us, because our old self is dying beneath the Sacramental touch, and the word of Scripture is realized in us,—“I live; no, not I, but Christ liveth in me.” This truth is beautifully illustrated by that old legend of the monk who, while our Lord was entertaining him with a gracious vision of Himself, heard the bell ring that called him to his appointed task. Duty’s claim fulfilled, he returned to find his God awaiting him, not as the Holy Child, but as grown to man’s estate. Thus had Jesus developed in the heart of the faithful monk, while he was performing the duty of the hour, and thus does He grow in us, and become, as it were, another Christ in our lives by His intimacy with our souls in the Holy Eucharist.

But even if the created soul of our Lord does not continue its actual presence, His graces do remain. How could he come and go without leaving a benediction on our lives? Even though He remain but a little while, He assuredly confers signal gifts upon the soul. And such is the doctrine of the Church:—she teaches us, that besides the wonderful union of Jesus with our soul which Holy Communion effects, it moreover bestows spe-

cial graces of its own. The Blessed Sacrament is indeed the chief fountain of grace. Other sacraments infuse grace into our souls, but in the Blessed Sacrament we possess Him who contains in Himself the source and the plenitude of all grace. I will not speak of the increase of sanctifying grace which Holy Communion, like every other sacrament, produces; that, I fear, would occupy too much time. But Holy Communion, like every other sacrament, has also a grace peculiar to itself, and which the other sacraments are not intended to confer. What is this special grace of the Blessed Sacrament? It is difficult to express it in a few words, yet a brief explanation may not prove useless.

We are supposed when receiving Holy Communion to be in the state of sanctifying grace,—and Holy Communion augments this grace. But sanctifying grace is not enough; the soul must utilize it. A power is of no avail, if allowed to remain inactive. A man may have great talents, a talent for painting, for music, for philosophy, for science, but of what profit are these gifts if not exercised because of his negligence, sloth, or other passions? He must stimulate himself to action,

then he will derive benefit from them. In like manner, sanctifying grace may reach immense heights in our souls, but if it remain dormant, it will prove almost fruitless; and indeed we incur imminent risk of losing it forever. Hence, sanctifying grace with its attendant virtues must be stimulated to exercise by actual grace. What then is the actual grace given us in Holy Communion? The actual grace given us in Holy Communion is precisely the causing of habitual charity to break out into actual charity; like a fire fallen from heaven it kindles into a bright flame the sanctifying grace which lies, as it were, like unconsumed fuel in the bottom of our souls. It makes our cold hearts burn with an unwonted fervor, which may be very brief, yet none the less real. We are able to surmount obstacles that before we could not overcome; sometimes things appear easy which but lately seemed impossible to our sluggish, cowardly nature; occasionally even a sudden gush of feeling may spring up in our hearts so as to cause us to break out into acts of love, and to impel us to generous resolutions. All this does not come from ourselves, it comes from Jesus within us, it is the actual grace of Holy Communion. At times we

feel spiritually refreshed, a kind of sweetness and holy joy embalms our souls; we experience anew a relish for heavenly things, we arm ourselves once more for the stern battle of life. What is all this but the unction of actual grace? The poor sinner who commits deeds for which he hates himself,—who has so keen a sense of the beauty of virtue and of the degradation of guilt, yet ever follows a course that fills him with bitterest remorse,—who painfully feels the shame of sin, until he is driven to the verge of despair,—that poor sinner kneels again and again at the altar to receive his God. This perseverance in drinking at the fountain of grace will gradually but surely cool down the blighting fever of sin; evil images and tendencies will depart from his mind, slowly his falls become less frequent and less weakening; in the most awful temptations he will sometimes be victorious. Spiritual joy, so long a stranger, at last dawns upon his soul, habits of vice are uprooted, contrary habits of virtue are established,—and, thank God, that sinner falls no more! Again, what is all this but the actual grace conferred by Jesus in Holy Communion?

Oh, how wrong are they who deprecate the frequent reception of Holy Communion! How many sinners groping in darkness would turn to paths of virtue if they were encouraged to kneel often at the table of the Lord! How many souls there are who ought to communicate frequently, yet who refrain from approaching our Lord because they do not understand the nature of love, and have erroneous ideas concerning the effects of this Sacrament! Oh, the Sacred Heart of Jesus is burning with love, it is intensely longing to enter the hearts of creatures. "With desire I have desired to eat this Pasch with you." Why then refuse to give Him entrance into our hearts and the hearts of others?

Absolutely speaking, no creature is worthy to receive Him. Even the angels are not pure in His sight. But He is willing to come to every one whose soul is not dead in mortal sin, and whose heart makes fitting preparation to receive Him. The confessor, of course, will judge how often it is expedient for us to eat the Bread of Life; he will discern whether our preparation be reasonably sufficient to justify our approach to the

Lord's banquet table. All should, however, remember that weekly communion is not frequent communion. Every adult Christian who is sincerely desirous of avoiding mortal sin or who is laboring to correct the criminal habits he has contracted, may once a week, partake of the food of the strong and drink the wine that germinates virgins. "Except you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you shall not have life in you." Let the sinner, the worldling, the imperfect, the child approach Him,—He loves them unutterably! Let them receive Him often, the oftener the better, if they have but the approbation of the guides of their souls. The road they have to traverse is so difficult, their daily occupations so absorbing, their temptations so intense, their faults so numerous, how shall they ever reach the goal except in the strength of a Bread Divine? "Arise and eat: for thou hast yet a great way to go." "As the living Father hath sent Me, and I live by the Father, so he that eateth Me, the same shall also live by Me."

The Bread of Life.

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“Living Bread! thy life supply;
Strengthen us, or else we die;
Fill us with celestial grace;
Thou, who feedest us below!
Source of all we have or know!
Grant that with thy saints above,
Sitting at the feast of love,
We may see Thee face to face.

Amen.”

THIRTEENTH CONFERENCE.

THE SACRIFICE.

THE Blessed Eucharist is not only a Memorial and a Sacrament, it is also a Sacrifice, and in instituting it as such, our Lord gave another proof of His love for man. What is a sacrifice? Instead of offering you the definition commonly given by theologians, let me rather describe it.—Man must acknowledge that God has absolute dominion over all things, that He can give and take life as He in His adorable wisdom sees fit. Moreover, as a sinner, man must acknowledge his iniquities and show himself willing to submit to any punishment the divine justice may inflict. How do we make this solemn, public recognition of our dependence and sinfulness? By means of sacrifice. We commonly take things which are adapted to represent or sustain the life of man, and offer them in a public manner to our Maker with a real or equivalent destruction. The

things which are offered and destroyed are generally precious, and bear some relation to the life of man, for we wish thereby to express our willingness to consecrate our lives to the service of our Maker, nay, surrender them as an atonement for our guilt. Thus, in the Old Law, living creatures such as kine, lambs and birds were offered, or inanimate objects such as wine, wheat and barley, and, in general, the first fruits of the earth. For instance, they slew a lamb, sprinkled its blood over the altar and the people, and burned its flesh. Among all nations of antiquity, owing to some vestiges of primitive traditions, there were similar oblations, even among idolatrous people, where virgins and babes were sacrificed. At all times the object offered was destroyed, or at least changed, to show that God is Master of life and death, and to acknowledge that He is the Supreme Sovereign of all things, and that we are absolutely dependent upon Him; in other words, to confess and profess that as He made all creatures out of nothing, so He has power and right to destroy them, and that we ought to be ready at all times to be treated by Him in whatsoever manner He pleases. Every sacrifice is, therefore, a public

recognition of God's dominion over us, and of our total dependence upon Him. Whenever a sensible object is thus offered and destroyed by a priest in his own name and in the name of his people, it is as much as to acknowledge before the whole world that God is our Master, that He can do with us as He wills, that we are in His hands, as clay in the hands of the potter. And this is the very essence of religion, for all religion, true and false, public and private, interior and exterior, has for object the giving to God the honor due Him—the recognition of His absolute sovereignty and dominion. A religion which has no Sacrifice as its chief and central act, falls short of a perfect religion and cannot be a divine religion, for it would have in it no act which is distinctively divine; its worship could not strictly be called divine worship. Prayer, thanksgiving, praise, homage, all enter into the object of religion, but these can be offered to a creature. A divine religion ought to embrace an act which can be offered to God alone. Such an act is Sacrifice. Therefore Sacrifice belongs necessarily and essentially to every true religion; there can be no divine public worship without it.

We have then need of a Sacrifice. Our divine Lord knew this. For, though His bloody Sacrifice on Mount Calvary was all-sufficient to wash away the sins of the world, and was a full and ample satisfaction for every injury done to God, yet we are bound to pray and deny ourselves, we are bound to receive the sacraments, in order that the merits of our Saviour's death may be applied to our souls and that the graces which He acquired may be bestowed according to our wants and dispositions. Though Jesus suffered and died for us, we cannot be saved unless by good works, prayers and the sacraments, we apply the fruits of His sufferings and death to our souls. In like manner, though the Sacrifice of the Cross is the source and the only source of all grace, yet a continual Sacrifice is necessary that the merits of the first Sacrifice may be applied to our souls, and that, to the end of time, we may have a means of approaching God, and of publicly offering Him our supreme homage and adoration. Our Lord with infinite goodness made provision for our needs: He instituted the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. Now, let us consider how the Mass is a real Sacrifice; by so doing we shall realize more and more the in-

effable love of the Sacred Heart for man, and we shall find that words have no power to express our wonder at the goodness and mercy of that ever adorable Heart.

According to the sacred traditions of every country and every race, a sacrifice was considered the more perfect, the more fully it embraced the following conditions: First, if the victim was real and external; second, if it was innocent and mild; third, if it was destroyed or changed; fourth, if it was offered by a properly appointed priest; fifth, if some shared in the oblation by partaking of what was sacrificed. Our Lord, in instituting a Sacrifice, would certainly institute a perfect Sacrifice. The Sacrifice of the Mass can be shown to embrace all these five conditions. *First*, is the Victim in the Mass something real and external? Yes, it is our Lord Himself, not only as God, but as man. He is there as truly, as really, as substantially as He was on Mount Calvary. Beneath the thin appearances of bread is the body that hung on the cross,—beneath the ruddy flash of seeming wine is the blood that trickled from His wounded side. Many saints have beheld Him in the Host as a smiling babe.

Though we have not the privilege of seeing Him thus with our eyes of flesh, we do behold Him with the eyes of Faith: we know He is there. *Secondly*, is the Victim of our altar innocent? Oh! He is innocence itself. He never knew sin: He is holy, spotless, undefiled. He is the Son in whom the Father is well pleased. Mary was innocent, but innocent by redemption. Jesus alone is innocent by nature: and He is our sin-offering, He is the Victim of sin. "He was wounded for our iniquities," says Isaias, "He was bruised for our sins: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and by His bruises we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray, everyone hath turned aside into his own way: and the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all." And is the Victim of our altar mild? He is mildness and sweetness itself. "Learn of Me, because I am meek and humble of heart." He is the Lamb of God! The priest takes Him in his hand and lays Him on the right, and He remains there. He lays Him on the left and He remains there. He places Him on the tongue of the saint or of the sacrilegious communicant, and like a lamb led to slaughter the Victim opens not His mouth. Behold the Lamb of

God! *Thirdly*, is the Victim destroyed or changed in the Mass? Yes. He is mystically destroyed by the separate consecration of bread and wine: for the form of bread represents the body, the form of wine represents the blood, and the bread and the wine being separately consecrated and lying separately on the altar, represent the real separation of Christ's blood from His body: the consecration is therefore a mystical destruction of the Victim. The Victim is also really changed, because His body and blood are changed into food, not merely into ordinary food, — but changed still more, i. e., from a material food into a spiritual food for the soul. This sacramental state of existence borders on annihilation. In the Incarnation He clothed Himself with the garment of man's mortal flesh. In His sacrifice on the cross that garment of His flesh was rent from head to foot. In His sacrifice on the altar, that Body is wrapped in the swaddling clothes of the sacred species; it lies helpless and speechless like a child, nay more, it is as if dead, and the species are, as it were, its shroud; still further, it exists and lives, and yet appears to have not even a corporal existence. What an emptying! What an

annihilation of self! *Fourthly*, who is the priest in the sacrifice of the Mass? On Calvary Christ was the priest and the victim. In Mass also, Christ is the priest and the victim. He is the priest, for it is in His name, and by His power, and because of His institution, that the ministers of the Catholic Church can change bread and wine into His adorable flesh and blood. The priest at the altar does not say, This is the body of Christ, This is the blood of Christ, but: "This is My body," and "This is My blood." Christ is the priest forever. *Fifthly*, that which is offered and sacrificed, should be participated in and partly, at least, consumed by the priest or the people. In the Old Law, even when the victim, called the holocaust, was completely burned, a cake was offered with the holocaust, in order that man might eat and thus communicate in the sacrifice. You know there is such a participation and communion in every Mass. If the people do not communicate, at least the priest does. He always consumes the flesh and the blood of the adorable Victim before him.

Is not all this wonderful? Is not every one of these five conditions an inexplicable mystery of

love? Is it surprising that through the prophet in the Old Law, God glories in this new, clean oblation? How little we reflect upon this sublime truth! With what awe and love and gratitude should we assist at the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass! A certain writer says beautifully, and with his words I shall conclude: "The angels were present at Calvary. Angels also are present at the Mass. If we cannot assist with the seraphic love and rapt attention of the angelic spirits, let us worship at least with the simple devotion of the shepherds of Bethlehem, and the unswerving faith of the Magi." Let us offer to our God the gift of a heart full of love for Him, full of sorrow for our sins, and full of the incense of adoration, praise and thanksgiving for mercies flowing from that Heart Divine, which having loved its own, loved them unto the end.

FOURTEENTH CONFERENCE.

HE ABIDETH WITH US.

IN the consecrated Host, Jesus is really present under the species of bread. His divinity and His humanity, His body and His soul, His flesh and His blood,—all are there as really, as truly, as substantially, as they are this moment in heaven. Within the little circle of that white Host is the human intellect, the human will, the human memory of Jesus. That old love with all its human and impassioned tenderness, which made Him weep over the children of Jerusalem because they spurned the gift of salvation He came to offer them,—that old love is still there in the Eucharist throbbing and trembling in the same kind human Heart. The body which Mary cradled on her bosom that far-off Christmas night, the lips which breathed to the Magdalen, “Go in peace and sin no more,” the eyes which rested lovingly upon the rich young man who turned

from his high vocation, the hand which blessed little children and traced the mystic writing on the sand, the brow which bled beneath the crown of thorns, the members which yielded to the piercing nails, the gaping wound which told of a heart broken for the sins of men;—all are there in the Host which abides ever in its tabernacle home. When we kneel before the altar, the meek eyes of Jesus are fixed upon us as once they were upon Simon Peter, He reads our poor hearts and He knows if we love Him. With His human ears He heard the cry of the penitent thief, “Lord, remember me, when Thou comest into Thy kingdom,”—with these same human ears he hears every prayer that falters on our lips. “I will not leave you orphans,” our Lord said to his apostles. He has kept His word. He has not left us, He is with us forever, to welcome our coming, to listen to our pleadings, to breathe sweet comfort to our weary souls. There is never a moment that we may not speak to Him, heart to heart. “Behold I am with you all days even to the consummation of the world.” We may take to Him the burden of our sorrows, we may confide to Him the secret of our cares. We may choose our own

time, and we may linger in His Presence as our love inclines. If our hearts are cold and dry, and we know not what to say, He will take delight even in our silence. He loves us, therefore our mere companionship is a comfort and a joy to this Lover of human souls. He is our chief Priest: we can confess to Him our sins, our shameful falls, our manifold transgressions, our humiliating weaknesses, our cowardly shrinkings from the claims of duty. He is our Judge; before Him we can examine, unblinded by self-love, our daily lives with all their hidden tendencies to the base things of earth. He is our Father; trustful as little children, we can reveal to Him our most cherished hopes, our loftiest aspirations. He is our Counsellor; we can ask Him for light to guide us in the perplexing questions that demand from us prudence and decision. He is our Good Shepherd; when we have strayed away from His loving care and have fed our hungry souls on husks of sin, we can return to Him in sorrow, assured of receiving from His blessed lips the kiss of pardon and peace. He is our God,—how completely then we can annihilate ourselves before Him, worshipping His infinite Perfections, ac-

knowledging Him to be the Master, the Creator, the Lord of life and death,—in a word, giving to Him the homage of our soul's profoundest adoration. Finally, He is our Spouse, He belongs to us, and we belong to Him. *Dilectus meus mihi, et ego illi!* "Neither is there any other nation so great, that hath its gods so nigh unto them, as our God is present to us!"

How can all this be explained, save by love? There are no obstacles that love cannot surmount, no chains that it cannot sever, no sacrifices that it cannot embrace, in truth, nothing is impossible to love. It requires a miracle for Jesus to be present in all the consecrated Hosts, and in every part of each **Host**: love works that miracle. It requires a **miracle** for a body to be without weight, color and extension: love works that miracle. It requires a miracle for flesh and blood to nourish a soul: love works that miracle. It requires a miracle to have the outward appearances of bread without the substance of bread, to have the species of wine without the substance of wine: love works that miracle. It requires a miracle for a human body to be placed at once in different positions, to be borne to the right and to the left, to

be laid in linen folds and to be held up before the gaze of the worshippers, to remain in the chalice and to enter the breast of the communicant, but love works that miracle as well. "Love is stronger than death," and the wounded Heart of Jesus is a victim of love. No wonder that He says by the mouth of His prophet: *Deliciae meae esse cum filiis hominum*. "My delight is to be with the sons of men." And even though they abandon and despise Him, wandering far into paths of sin, yet does He remain ever in the tabernacle watching for the return of His prodigal sons. This is the reason of the Real Presence in our midst. ✓

The saints understood this, all without exception had an intense attraction for the Blessed Sacrament, finding their delight to be in Its presence. Saint Liguori recounts many touching instances of devotion to the Holy Eucharist. At one time for some reason, Saint Aloysius was forbidden to remain long in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament. But whenever he passed before It, he felt himself so drawn by the sweet attractions of our Lord, that only with the greatest efforts could he tear himself away; and when constrained to de-

part he would cry: "O Lord! let me go. O Lord! let me go!" There it was also that Saint Francis Xavier found refreshment in the midst of his arduous labors in India. During the day he was engaged in traveling, preaching, instructing, visiting the sick and administering the sacraments; at times, indeed, he was so exhausted that it was necessary to support his weary arm while he baptized the Indian neophyte, yet, at night, he was wont to pass hour after hour before the Blessed Sacrament. Saint Francis Regis had the same tender love for Jesus on the altar; oftentimes on finding the church closed, he remained at the door on his knees, exposed to the elements, and there he worshipped our God hidden in the Host. How tender, above all, was the devotion of Saint Wenceslaus to the Blessed Sacrament! It was his custom to gather the wheat and the grapes to make, with his own hands, the wafers and wine to be used in the Holy Sacrifice. Even on winter nights he frequently sought a church to visit the divine Guest of the tabernacle. These visits, says Saint Liguori, enkindled in his fervent soul such flames of holy love, that this ardor imparted itself to his very body, taking from the snow upon

which he walked, its wonted cold; for, it is related that the servant who accompanied him on those nightly excursions suffered much from the rigors of the season. On one occasion the holy king, perceiving this, was so moved to compassion, that he ordered the attendant to follow in the footsteps; the servant obeyed and marvellous was the result, for at once a genial warmth was diffused through all his frame.

Oh, how dear every chapel should be to the Christian heart. It is our Lord's dwelling-place; there He remains day after day, to console, enlighten, protect and defend us, to nourish and strengthen our famished souls. Each sacramental shrine is the home and the heaven of myriads of angels who ever surround, like a faithful guard, our patient Eucharistic King. Why may not the children of men find likewise there a paradise of pure delights? *Si scires donum Dei.* "If thou didst know the gift of God." O Faith! O Love! draw near, and weep with angels in the shadow of Christ's altar throne. "Could you not watch one hour with Me?" That voice trembling down the ages, gives its echo to the silence which lingers around the sanctuary. The generations of earth

pass heedlessly by, unconscious of the Prisoner waiting there bound by chains of love divine. Illumined by His grace, we have seen behind the veil which shrouds Him from the worldling's gaze. We have heard the pleadings of His Sacred Heart. We know His longings to repair the glory of His Father, we know His yearnings to reclaim the souls that stray in paths of sin. "Behold this Heart which hath so loved men, that It has exhausted and consumed Itself to testify to them Its love." With these words sounding in our hearts, let us offer ourselves to our injured God as victims of reparation and of love. With generosity of spirit let us promise Him to give and not to count the cost, to fight and not to heed the wounds, to toil and not to seek for rest, to labor with the holy joy of knowing that we do His ever blessed will, and that one day He will be our exceeding great reward.

FIFTEENTH CONFERENCE.

REPARATION.

WE have seen that the devotion to the Sacred Heart is a devotion of love to love; hence, these conferences on the Sacred Heart would not be complete unless we dwelt for a brief space on the subject of reparation. For, our divine Lord, in revealing His Heart to Blessed Margaret Mary, spoke not only of His love, but of His outraged love, and desired in return not only love, but also reparation. He complained that He received from the greater part of men only ingratitude, coldness and neglect; that what pained Him most of all, was that some hearts consecrated to Him, should treat Him thus: and therefore, He bade her receive Holy Communion often in the spirit of atonement and manifested His desire that a special Feast of the Sacred Heart be instituted, in order that public acts of reparation might be offered to Him. Love is indeed the formal ob-

ject of the devotion to the Sacred Heart, as already stated, but it is a love that impels to reparation.

Let us endeavor to arrive at a clear understanding of the nature of reparation; in other words, let us study what is meant precisely by reparation. The matter may be a little abstruse, yet, I think, we shall be rewarded for our effort when we discover that well defined truths are the foundations of this devotion.

We will begin by reflecting that reparation is not merely punishment, satisfaction is not satisfaction. Sound philosophy tells us that punishment is medicinal, deterrent and retributive. It is medicinal, when it is calculated to mend the ways of the culprit; it is deterrent, when it is calculated to deter others from similar violations of law; it is retributive, when it is intended simply to make the criminal suffer for what he has done. When a wrong has been committed, it is proper that the offender suffer for it, not simply that he may be taught not to repeat the wrong—in this way we correct animals,—nor simply that others may be deterred from doing likewise—in this way we save the community,—but it is fitting that he suf-

fer because he has disturbed the order of things, he has violated justice, he has unduly appropriated to himself pleasures not lawful for him, he has unjustly lifted himself above others; he must, then, be made to realize his usurpation, to keep his place, he must be deprived of what is not his, and, to a degree, of what is his,—the balance must be restored, the order of things must be maintained,—restitution, retribution must be made. This is done by retributive punishment. Thus, instinctively we feel pained and indignant when an atrocious crime escapes punishment; we experience universally a sentiment of relief when a criminal has expiated his offense on the gallows. For, although there is not such a thing as vengeance for private wrong, since God has said, "Vengeance is Mine," yet the principle of retribution for wrong committed, as well as for good done, is right: upon it rests chiefly the justification of eternal punishment.

Now, observe, an offender may have suffered adequately for the injustice he has committed, still there may not be in this suffering what is called reparation. In other words, there may be, as philosophers term it, *satispassion*, but there is

not satisfaction,—satisfaction supposes something more. Satisfaction, reparation aims at undoing, destroying, repairing an offense; it desires reconciliation, it seeks to regain the good will and affection of the one who has been offended, it wishes to undo the evil committed, mainly as an act of justice, but also as an act of love. It is urged thereto by love. It knows that the one injured is rightfully displeased, that, in consequence, there is a separation, a chasm between them; love induces it to remove this obstacle, to close up this chasm, to atone for this offense by apology, by voluntary suffering, or by sacrifices which are the promptings of love. This is what is called reparation. The first difference, therefore, between satisfaction and satispassion, or in other words, between reparation and punishment, is this: reparation is voluntary,—punishment is not so. Retributive justice requires that the order disturbed be restored, and it does restore that order by the infliction of punishment. By means of punishment the offender is made to suffer because he allowed himself illegitimate pleasure; he is lowered because he unjustly elevated himself. That is satispassion. But if the offender willingly inflicts

the same punishment upon himself, if he himself satisfies retributive justice, then we have reparation. In the first instance, it is the judge who decrees the amount of punishment and inflicts the same; in the second instance, it is the offender himself who satisfies justice. The second difference between reparation and punishment is found in the end that both strive to attain. Punishment as such does not seek to remove the offense given, but rather the disorder, the unlawfulness, the self-inflation inherent in every offense. The judge inflicts punishment to restore the order violated, not precisely to restore honor, for honor cannot be recovered by simple punishment. But reparation aims at removing the offense itself, and returning every honor to the person offended. Reparation therefore accomplishes far more than punishment; reparation not only re-establishes order where there existed disorder, but moreover, removes the offense itself, effects reconciliation, and restores peace and friendship between the offender and the person offended.

To impress this distinction more deeply and to show the importance of this distinction between satisfaction and satispassion, that is, between

reparation and punishment, let us consider the nature of our Blessed Saviour's atonement for sin. Was that atonement a real satisfaction for sin, or was it only a satispassion for sin? According to Protestant teaching, the essence of our Lord's atonement consisted in this—that He took upon Himself all the punishment of our guilt. He satisfied for sin, by suffering for sin. He made Himself the victim of the Divine wrath, He was a child pierced by the darts of His Father's vengeance: that is to say, His atonement was only a satispassion, for He did not seek to honor and glorify His Father; He did not aim to satisfy for the offense itself, by giving Him as much honor as sin had taken from Him, but He wished merely to satisfy His anger, His justice, by enduring the punishment that sin deserved. This is the Protestant theory. But according to Catholic teaching, our Lord's atonement was a veritable satisfaction. "He was bruised for our iniquities, He was wounded for our sins," that we might be reconciled to His Father, not merely that we might not suffer. Of His own accord, He was led like a lamb to the slaughter. He assumed all our debt through love of His Father and in obedience to

the Divine Will, and by that love and obedience, even unto death, He glorified His Father as much as sin had dishonored Him,—nay, the homage rendered was greater than the malice of sin, because it was the oblation of the Infinite to the Infinite. Saint Thomas lucidly explains this doctrine in these words: “He truly satisfies for an offense who offers to the offended person something which the latter esteems in an equal or higher degree than he hates the offense. But Christ suffering through love and obedience offered God something more than was demanded by the malice of the offense of the entire human race: first, because of the greatness of the love with which He suffered, secondly, because of the worth of His life, it being the life of God and man, thirdly, because of the universality of His suffering and the greatness of His pains. And therefore His Passion was not only a sufficient, but a superabundant satisfaction for the sins of the human race.” This passage from Saint Thomas casts light upon the distinction that I have endeavored to point out, viz.: that satisfaction is more than satisfaction, that reparation is more than mere suffering or punishment,—that

punishment contents justice, reparation contents justice and love,—that punishment removes the disorders consequent upon, or inherent in every offense, reparation removes both the disorders and the offense,—that punishment springs from necessity, reparation springs from a desire of regaining the esteem and love of the person offended.

May our good Master deign to penetrate us more and more with the spirit of reparation. Let us pray that He will imprint upon our hearts the holy maxims of penance and self-denial, that He may thus find in us devoted repairers of His injured love, generous spouses and faithful apostles of His Sacred Heart!

SIXTEENTH CONFERENCE.

THE MALICE OF SIN.

WE now understand the significance of reparation. Reparation implies the commission of some wrong or the omission of some duty, in other words, it implies sin. It remains for us then to consider in the light of theology the exact nature of sin.

In creating the world, God necessarily had an end in view. That end was His own glory. The Scriptures accordingly tell us that He made all things for Himself. He was free to create, but having determined to create, He could not create but to manifest His glory. We exist ultimately for that. His majesty, His love, His wisdom, all require that we serve to that end, and that all our interests, spiritual and temporal, private and public, be subordinate to His honor and glory. His end as Creator is necessarily our end as creatures; hence, we are not to serve God solely with a view

to our own salvation, but above all, to promote His interests, His glory. Yet, how it can be truly said, that God created the world out of love, and that He made all things for man's sake, would involve long explanations and thus lead too far from our present subject. Only let it be well understood that the glory of God is the end of creation, and that all creatures exist for that end.

Now, what is sin? Sin is a violation of this supreme law of creation, that all things must tend to God's greater glory. The sinner breaks through the order that divine wisdom has necessarily established, he virtually makes for himself another end, he relegates God, the supreme Good, to an inferior place, and practically substitutes for God a created thing, by living for it as his end. Sin is likewise an act of disobedience to the highest Lawgiver, an ingratitude to our greatest Benefactor, an impiety to our best Father, a folly because a surrendering of our true peace and happiness: but the quintessence of sin lies in the offense given to God, the wrong done to Him, by making a creature occupy the place that is and must be His. He must be the highest, the first and the last, He must be the end for which all creation exists, lives

and moves: to deny it by substituting a creature in His place, is a species of idolatry, it is casting Him from His throne, it is necessarily a wrong done Him, an insult offered Him. True, God cannot be deprived of His own infinite peace and happiness; and because supremely wise and powerful, He can draw good out of evil. He can, even in hell, force the sinner to acknowledge His justice and might and holiness, yet it is also true that sin virtually desires the destruction, the annihilation of God. To reduce the Supreme Being to the order of a creature, to put Him after a creature, is to dethrone Him, to destroy, to annihilate Him. That is precisely what sin does. In effect, that is, in reality, it cannot destroy God, but in desire, as far as possible, it does destroy God. Here we have the very essence of sin.

At this point the question arises: Is this offense, which constitutes every mortal sin, infinite? Every mortal sin is an insult offered to God, an injury inflicted upon Him,—is this insult, this injury, infinite? To answer this question correctly, we must carefully distinguish between what theologians now call active and passive injury. Active injury is the act itself which inflicts injury. Sin,

taken in this sense, is not infinite. Sin often requires but a moment for its commission, then it becomes a thing of the past. The act is transitory, the act of a creature, and limited and therefore finite. The so-called stain that sin leaves upon the soul is also finite, for that stain is nothing else than the deprivation of grace, and grace is something created, something finite. The turning to a creature as to its end is likewise finite, for that creature is finite. Hence, we say, the offense which constitutes mortal sin, is finite in as far as it is an act. But there is also a passive offense, a passive injury. Passive injury is the wrong which the person who is injured suffers. An illustration may reflect a stronger light upon the truth of this statement. I injure my neighbor by destroying his dwelling. My guilt may be increased or lessened by circumstances. It may have been carelessness on my part, or vindictiveness; the crime may have been committed consciously, with great deliberation, or in a fit of passion, etc., etc. Circumstances of time, place, manner, motive, all affect the measure of my active injury. But there is also the damage inflicted on my neighbor. That

damage is independent of my guilt: it may be to the amount of one or five thousand dollars; its magnitude is not influenced by my personal culpability. He suffers an injury—that injury is called a passive injury. Thus we see the offense of sin, as an act, is not infinite; we ask, is the offense, the wrong which God suffers from mortal sin infinite? Sound theology answers, yes. For the magnitude of an offense is measured, first, by the worth, the dignity, the greatness of the one offended. The more elevated the person offended, the greater the insult which is offered him. And since God's dignity and excellence are unlimited, since His rights to the creature's submission are boundless, since His sovereignty, His goodness, His perfections are simply infinite, the insult by which His majesty is outraged, and a creature substituted as last end, must consequently be infinite. Such is the argument of Saint Thomas: He who commits mortal sin, loves the creature more than he loves God. Loving the creature more, he prefers it to God. But to prefer the less worthy to the more worthy is to offend the more worthy, and the offense is the greater, the greater the dif-

ference between the two. Consequently, mortal sin, in a sense, is an infinite offense because of the infinite majesty of God.

There is an objection urged against this conclusion, the refutation of which will throw light upon the utility of the distinction between active and passive injury. The matter may present some difficulties, but the attempt to solve them will without doubt enable us to understand a long series of practical truths. The objection is as follows: The injury inflicted grows indeed with the dignity of the person offended, but not in arithmetical proportion, that is to say, not altogether in the same degree. For otherwise we might also argue thus: the excellence of an act grows with the excellence of its object; the object of an act of divine love is infinitely excellent, is God; hence an act of divine love is an act of infinite excellence, which would be false. Therefore, it is said, the argument of Saint Thomas is illogical and false. The answer to this objection is plain. An act is not yet infinitely excellent, because its object is infinitely excellent; a great many factors may enter to make that act more or less perfect. If you say, for example, to the farmer: "The more corn you

sow, the more you will reap", he will admit it. But say to him: "Sow double the amount of corn, and you will reap double the amount", he will laugh at you: for the success of his act of sowing will depend upon a great many contingent factors,—on the quality of soil, weather, labor, etc. But the status of the question is different when you speak, not of an act, but the injury done by an act. When I do another an injury, that injury must not be measured by my personal culpability alone, but by the amount of damage that the other suffers. A man can throw a diamond into the ocean, a child can do this,—but in either case the diamond is lost, the loss inflicted upon the owner is equally great. In like manner, when Saint Thomas argues that the injury of sin is infinite, he speaks of passive injury, of the injury that God suffers, the wrong that is done Him, the insult that is offered Him. The sinner who commits mortal sin, may be more or less guilty, but in every case, the insult offered is infinite, because, to repeat once more, in desire at least, God is annihilated and a creature chosen as His substitute.

"As by one man sin entered into this world, and by sin, death, so death passed upon all men, in

whom all have sinned." And we have our own personal sins: how many, God only knows! Who can pay our tremendous debt? What reparation is necessary? How can we make it? That, we shall study in our next conference. May God bless our efforts that the truth make us in more than one sense, free!

SEVENTEENTH CONFERENCE.

THE SATISFACTION FOR SIN.

THE malice of sin is objectively infinite, illimitable; and as we advance with our studies, we realize in fuller measure what a fearful injury is done to God by every mortal offense. How appalling is the revelation that sin is without bounds, without limits, indeed infinite. The question then arises, how can the sinner ever obtain his forgiveness, how can he ever undo the evil he has wrought? When the angels committed their first sin, they were probably hurled at once into the abyss of hell without a moment's time for repentance. Man pollutes his soul with mortal sin, with many sins, sins that cry to heaven for vengeance, and he still lives, because God wishes to spare him and therefore gives him time for repentance. Here many questions present themselves for solution. Why did not the Most High spare the angels? Why does He spare man? Could He have immediately abandoned the hu-

man race after the fall of Adam? Could He have eternally punished the race because of the guilt consequent upon the first sin? Could He forgive sin absolutely without demanding any reparation, and inflicting any punishment? Or could He forgive sin without requiring full satisfaction? For example, could He have pardoned the sinner after the sinner had cancelled only a part of the debt contracted? In other words, was it absolutely required that sin be fully atoned for, before God could pardon it? These questions are deeply interesting, and, in all ages, have offered a broad field of inquiry to the Catholic philosopher and theologian. For our present purpose it is needless to discuss these points. The fact is that God did not abandon the human race, nor does He forgive sin without satisfaction, nay, He requires ample satisfaction. Saint Thomas explains why it is more becoming that God should not forgive sin without having received due satisfaction for it. It is evident that His infinite justice is manifested pre-eminently by demanding reparation and restitution. His infinite mercy is manifested more strikingly, because to pardon without reparation is not so honorable to the sinner, as

to pardon him after he has paid his debt. His infinite wisdom is also manifested, in a higher degree, because to pardon man only after fitting reparation has been made, is more humiliating to Satan who first lured man into sin, and whose forfeited place man is to occupy. The divine justice, mercy and wisdom all render it more becoming that sin should not be pardoned, unless the malice of sin, the injury done to God by sin, is fully repaired.

But how is this to be accomplished? Can man ever undo an infinite injury? Man's life is like a flower that blooms for awhile, then withers and falls to the dust. He lives to-day, to-morrow he is seen no more. And his mind is so feeble, his will so fickle, his heart so frail, his powers so finite; can the finite ever propitiate the Infinite? Evidently, man can never singly or collectively give adequate satisfaction for even one grievous sin. If man cannot, no creature as mere creature can, for every creature is finite. Consequently, only a being equal to God can repair completely the injury of sin. But on the one hand, God alone is infinite; He alone is equal to Himself. There is none like to Him: all things are before Him

as if they were not, all things are absolutely His, there is nothing that was not made by Him. And on the other hand, God cannot apologize to Himself, He cannot suffer, He cannot change; as He was from eternity, so He always is; He cannot deny His own sovereign, infinite majesty, yet He is the one offended. Apparently, therefore, an adequate reparation for sin seems impossible. Yet God's justice, mercy and wisdom fitly require complete satisfaction for sin: moreover, He has signified that without this complete satisfaction He is unwilling to forgive.

There was only one thing possible in this overwhelming difficulty. If the offended God demanded full satisfaction, it was necessary that He Himself should become a creature, that He should remain God, and at the same time assume in His personality a created nature, that in His created nature, He should render the Godhead honor, praise and obedience, and thus atone for His creature's guilt. And therefore "The Word was made flesh and dwelt amongst us." He was bruised for our sins and wounded for our iniquities; He was as a worm trodden under foot, the outcast of His own people, the lamb who opened

not His mouth when He was led to the slaughter. By His wounds we are healed, by His bruises we are saved, by His blood we are ransomed from eternal perdition. And in heaven all the multitude which no man can number, the angels and the saints, the ancients and prophets, standing before the throne and in sight of the Lamb, clothed in white robes and with palms in their hands, all cry aloud, "To Him that sitteth on the throne and to the Lamb, benediction and honor and glory and power forever and ever because Thou wast slain and hast redeemed us to God in Thy blood, out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation."

Here again many questions might be raised and many difficulties proposed. One reason why the satisfaction of our Lord was so perfect, was because it was so entirely free. All His sufferings were voluntarily borne, His death voluntarily embraced, because His whole human nature and all the laws that governed it were entirely under His command. It is true, the martyr's sufferings are also voluntary, but, as has been frequently stated, while the martyr is being tortured he cannot help feeling the pain that fire and sword inflict upon

him,—the wounds are made,—the members are cut, the nerves and bones laid bare. But at any moment our Lord could have suspended the pain, removed the nails from His hands and feet, and descended from the wood of the cross: hence, as was said before, His sufferings and death were **doubly meritorious** because so absolutely free. “I lay down My life. No man taketh it away from Me: but I lay it down of Myself, and I have power to lay it down: and I have power to take it up again.” He was led like a lamb to the slaughter because He willed it. Yet that very freedom of His atonement offers a striking difficulty. The eternal Father commands His Son to suffer. Jesus Himself said: “This commandment I have received from My Father.” It was necessary then for our Lord to obey: had He disobeyed the mandate, sin would have been committed. But an obedience which is necessary, appears to lose much of meritoriousness; it can furnish satisfaction, can it offer satisfaction? For satisfaction, an act must be free. Here is a difficulty. Thank God, as Cardinal Newman has so luminously remarked, difficulties and doubts are not correlative: a thousand difficulties do not authorize one doubt.

But the question before us does present a difficulty: how is it answered? Theologians offer various solutions, but the best answer is apparently this simple one. The will is not free because it has the power to commit sin. God is free, yet He can never be unholy; the Blessed in heaven are free, still they have not the power of again yielding to temptation, they are confirmed in their love of God. The possibility of doing wrong is, as philosophers express it, a defect of liberty, a defect which is essential to every free creature while in a probationary state. Our Lord assumed our human nature but not this defect, since it is a blemish incompatible with His holiness as Man-God. He was free then, absolutely free, but His sanctity and His love of His Father would never permit Him to go counter to that will. *Propterea exaltavit illum Deus*, "for this reason did God lift Him up," *factus est, obediens usque ad mortem, mortem autem crucis*, "because He was obedient unto death, even unto the death of the cross."

Another reason why the satisfaction made by our Lord was so perfect, is found in the intense, universal and peculiar sufferings He endured. First, in the intensity of His sufferings. Saint

Thomas gives four reasons for maintaining that the pains our Lord endured in body and soul were the most acute that man can suffer on earth. They can be summed up perhaps in this one reason assigned by St. Bonaventure,—that our Lord's body and soul were divinely framed for suffering, and that He permitted each power to act and endure independent of every other; it was because of this, we know, He refused to take the wine and gall offered Him on the cross,—He wished to die naturally in the full consciousness of all His excruciating torments. Secondly, His sufferings were quasi universal. Saint Thomas shows how our Lord suffered at the hands of prince and pauper, priest and levite, Jew and Gentile, man and woman,—how He suffered in all His members and in all His senses,—how, finally, He died struck by His Father, by men spit upon, mocked, bereft of His very clothing—the outcast of His people, as a worm trodden under foot. Thirdly, His death was peculiarly shameful and accursed. The Mosaic Scriptures even had said: “He is accursed of God that hangeth on a tree!” By the fruit of the tree sin had come into the world: He was to make restitution for sin, and therefore had Him-

self suspended to the tree of the cross, restoring what had been robbed; according to these words of the Psalmist, "Then did I pay that which I took not away."

Can we marvel that the saints call the crucifix the book which they never weary of studying and from which they learn all wisdom? Jesus dead upon the cross is the measure of the malice of sin, of our personal sin. That blood-shedding, that agony, that fearful death, all is truly, really our work. Oh, if His Passion had never been repeated since the *consummatum est* on Calvary's Mount! It is renewed each time a soul yields to mortal sin. Yet the arms of Jesus are ever open to embrace us, His head is ever inclined to give us the kiss of peace, His ear is ever ready to hearken to our woes. When we weep, His loving Heart becomes our blest retreat, when we tell Him of our guilt, His gentle voice breathes in the calm, "Go, penitent hearts, and sin no more." Ah, loving Saviour! how merciful is Thy heart for us. Standing beside Thy cross we ask—What may we do to prove our love for Thee? Heart ever tender and compassionate! filled with infinite love, broken by our ingratitude and pierced by our sins,

accept the full oblation that we now make to Thee. Take us, Lord, with all our hopes, our joys, our griefs; draw us ever nearer to Thy wounded side and teach us all Thy blessed ways.

EIGHTEENTH CONFERENCE.

APPLICATION OF CHRIST'S SATISFACTION.

OUR Lord's satisfaction was perfect; He atoned for all sins. He suffered for all men. Yet, despite the fulness of His atonement, all men are not forgiven, and, even when sin is forgiven, reparation frequently remains due. Christ's satisfaction, then, must be applied to men in certain ways, under certain conditions. The holy Scripture renders ample testimony to the truth of this teaching.

In his epistle to the Ephesians (i. 23) and again in that to the Colossians, Saint Paul touches upon a profound mystery. He says that the Church is a mystical body of which we are the members, but Christ is the head, and the Holy Ghost the soul of that body. The life of the Head becomes the life of the members, and it is the Holy Ghost who transmits to the members this life of the Head, its virtues, its powers, its merits, its

graces. The members do not live and cannot live except by reason of the Head, just as the branches cannot live and bear fruit except by reason of the vine and its sap. "Without Me you can do nothing," says our blessed Saviour. Observe, however, that immediately after comparing the Church to a perfect organism, Saint Paul lays down this other truth, that the members must labor in union with the Head for the growth of the whole body. These are his words: "By *doing* the truth in charity, we may in all things grow up in Him who is the head, Christ; from whom the whole body being compacted and fitly joined together, by what every joint *supplieth*, according to the *operation* in the *measure of every part*, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in charity." Faith without good works is dead and of no avail; it must be a living faith. The just man liveth by faith. And if, after being justified, he falls into sin, he must repent of his sin and acknowledge it in the tribunal of penance, otherwise life will not be returned to his soul. That is to say, each member of that mystical body must participate in the life of its Head. Jesus prayed, man too must pray; Jesus labored, man too must labor.

Ordinarily speaking, on adults the graces of the sacraments will not be bestowed, unless the recipient does his share by way of preparation. Jesus did penance, man too must do works of penance. "Unless you do penance, you shall all likewise perish." Jesus denied Himself, man too must deny himself. Jesus suffered, man too must suffer. "If any man will come after Me, let him take up his cross daily, and follow Me." But must this be voluntary suffering? That is, must every Christian of his own accord, inflict some species of pain upon himself? It is sufficiently evident that we must practice self-denial in order to fortify our souls for temptations, that we must separate ourselves from occasions of sin, that we must fulfill the various duties of our state of life, that we must observe the laws of the Church and of all duly appointed authority, that we must accomplish the penances imposed upon us in Sacramental Confession, that we must endure the annoyances, sicknesses and afflictions which are incident to human life: all this is evident enough: but are we bound under pain of sin to do more, to gain indulgences, for instance, in order to remove the punishment still due to our forgiven

sins? I do not know of any theologian who maintains this opinion. We are not bound under pain of sin to make for ourselves a purgatory in this world. God is so good that He does not bind us under penalty of new sin to remove all the punishment remaining due to pardoned sins: yet it is equally true that He wills us to satisfy for our sins, that He wills us to unite our satisfactions to those of His beloved Son, that He is pleased to see us enter into the designs of His justice and seek to satisfy it, and that, though He loves the soul which must wing its flight to purgatory, He necessarily loves more tenderly that soul which owes nothing to His justice, for He loves His justice as He loves His mercy. He is the God who desires order and harmony, He is the Father who wishes to unite His children to Himself in heaven, and He must necessarily be displeased with all that breathes of disorder and hate every obstacle between Him and those He loves. How true, therefore, these words of Saint Gregory the Great, which the Church requires every priest to read in the office of the fourth Sunday of Advent. "Bring forth worthy fruits of penance. I say worthy fruits of penance, for he who has sinned

much should repent much, and in as far as he has allowed himself illicit things, in so far should he deprive himself of licit things." Whoever, therefore, has once sinned mortally against his Creator, can never punish himself too severely for his crime, and, if he will, he can justly deprive himself of every comfort and pleasure.

So far, we have seen, adults must exert themselves in various ways in order that the merits of Christ's death be applied to their souls. But does this rule also hold, if we wish to benefit the souls of others? Is penance, expiation, reparation, necessary, that we draw down graces upon those who do not repent of their sins and offer atonement for them? Labor is necessary, that is evident. Even the apostles had to travel from place to place, to preach in season and out of season, to reproach, correct, reprove, without ceasing, to be ridiculed, hated, persecuted, imprisoned. Labor is equally necessary in these latter days. Priests are not only the dispensers of the mysteries of God, they are also preachers, teachers, shepherds, guardians, rulers of their flocks. A ceaseless round of external duties engages the attention of those who are charged with the care of souls.

Prayer likewise is necessary. The apostles ordained deacons that they might give themselves more freely to prayer and preaching. Saint Paul begs for himself the prayers of the faithful. Again and again the Holy Ghost by the voice of the Scriptures exhorts us to pray for one another, to pray for all men. Is suffering also necessary that the merits of Christ be applied to our souls? Yes, I prove it, first, from the fact that the Church is a mystical body. We are the members. We must then assist one another; the strong must help the weak; the agile must support the lame and the halt, every joint supplieth and maketh increase of the body to the edifying itself unto charity. When one organ of a body suffers, all the other organs do their utmost to relieve the sufferings of the wounded member. I prove it, secondly, from the words and conduct of Saint Paul. He tells us he makes up for what is wanting of the sufferings of Christ, that the Church may grow and that sinners may be converted. The sufferings of Christ are wanting, are deficient according to the Apostle. He too must suffer in many watchings, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness, in prisons, in stripes, in

death. Why? To save the souls of Jew and Gentiles. I prove it, thirdly, from the history of God's dealings with individuals and nations. He required not only prayer, a sorrow for the past and a newness of life, but a prayer and a sorrow that impelled to works of penance, and of steadfast penance. Job did penance in dust and ashes, so did David, Manasses, and the Ninivites. In the prophecy of Joel, "The Lord saith: Be converted to Me with all your heart in fasting, in weeping and in mourning." And you remember when Amalec fought against Israel in Raphidim, Moses prayed with uplifted hands. When he besought God thus, Israel overcame, but "if he let them down a little, Amalec overcame." All day did Moses pray thus and his arms grew weary, but Aaron and Hur stayed them up on both sides. The prayer of penance was mighty,—the enemy fled, and victory crowned the arms of Israel. Yes, penance was necessary. The same truth may be proved from the constant tradition in the Church, and from the practice and maxims of all the saints. How often do we not read in the lives of the servants of God, that when they desired to convert a hardened sinner, to remove a grievous scan-

dal, or to obtain a signal grace, they not only prayed, but fasted, deprived themselves of sleep, scourged themselves to blood, and then imitated the example of our Lord, "Who in the days of His flesh with a strong cry and tears" offered Himself to His Father that for men He might be "the cause of eternal salvation."

He loved us and delivered Himself for us to be our example in time and our blest reward in eternity. Truth is the same yesterday, to-day and forever: its principles have their source in Him who is the Immutable. The infinite Majesty having been outraged by sin, must be appeased in every age, and by every man born into the world. God exacts atonement in the Person of His Son, and He exacts it of all upon whom rests the curse in Adam. Penance, reparation is what our Eucharistic Lord requires. "Weep not over Me, but weep for yourselves and for your children." Fill up those things which are wanting of the sufferings of Christ. As of old, so now, do penance. Of old all the people cried to the Lord with great earnestness and they humbled their souls in fastings and prayers, both they and their wives. And the priests put on haircloth and they caused the

little children to lie prostrate before the temple of the Lord, and the altar of the Lord they covered with haircloth. And they cried to the Lord, the God of Israel, with one accord, that their children might not be made a prey, and their wives carried off, and their cities destroyed, and their Holy Things profaned, and that they might not be made a reproach to the Gentiles. And God had mercy with regard to the evil which He had said that He would do to them, and He did it not.

If we too would avert the evils impending because of our iniquities, we must take up our cross and look out for the Divine footprints as we ascend the mountain of life's sacrifice. We must climb its rugged heights in our day, even as the servants of God have ever done.

The law of suffering is a bitter yoke and its burden is a weary weight to bear, but we may find strength for our faltering steps along our cross-strewn way! Again and again let us rest our thoughts upon the Sacred Heart; let us study Its hatred of sin, Its devotedness, Its self-sacrifice; let us meditate upon that love which lays down life for a friend; let us understand Its all-absorbing love for the Father and for that Father's will

and glory. Devotion to the Sacred Heart will cast a ray of beautiful light through the valleys of grief, tinge with heavenly brightness the rugged mountain paths of self-denial and abnegation, and help us to look out with larger trust for the promised rewards of God. Yes, under the influence of devotion to the Sacred Heart, prayer is a more intimate communion of heart with heart, labor imparts new dignity to our life, and penance becomes a bundle of myrrh precious to him who bears it, and precious and comforting as soothing balm to the Heart pierced for us on Calvary.

NINETEENTH CONFERENCE.

VICTIMS WITH CHRIST.

THERE is an apostleship of suffering as well as an apostleship of word and prayer. A priest is officially commissioned to exercise this triple apostleship. Participating in the priesthood of Jesus Christ, he must himself be like Christ, not only a priest, a sacrificer, but also a victim. As watchman, ambassador, shepherd, teacher, sower and reaper, he must not only labor and pray for souls, he must also be willing to suffer for them. Many are found faithfully spending their strength in quest of the strayed sheep of their flocks, but alas! not all are willing to suffer, not all have the spirit of unreserved self-oblation. Our blessed Saviour therefore seeks elsewhere to supply this want. He seeks victims, especially among souls still radiant with their baptismal innocence, or who having lost that pearl of rare price have recovered it in the deep waters of penance and

tears. He finds them sometimes on the highways of the world, but more frequently in the enclosed gardens of religious communities. And finding souls thus generous to enter into His life of sacrifice, He pours out upon them an abundance of griefs and sorrows. He communicates to them the spirit of prayer, the love of humiliations, of sufferings and deprivations. He roots out of their hearts pride and its succulent branches, the love of approval and esteem, jealousy, self-sufficiency, ambition, and human respect, and plants instead a profound humility and a veneration for authority. Some of them our blessed Saviour ordains to suffer for infidels, others for heretics and schismatics, others again for sinners in general, or for souls in purgatory, for the conversion of a certain country, for this or that parish, family or individual. Finally, our Lord ordains some to suffer for the sanctification of priests and the multiplication of earnest workmen in His vineyard, which vocation next to that of the ministry is the noblest that can be entrusted to souls. Such special victims we know to have been Saints Catherine of Sienna, Mary Magdalen of Pazzi, Aloysius Gonzaga, Rose of Lima, Blessed Margaret Mary,

and many others who, innocent themselves, suffered for the guilty.

But when our Lord revealed Himself to Blessed Margaret Mary and bade her promote the Devotion to His Sacred Heart, He certainly did not design to make of all those who should practice this devotion special victims, such as I have described. Out on the broad fields of the world and in the narrower sphere of religion He meant to inflame ordinary Christian souls with divine love, and to appeal to them to make some reparation for the insults, the negligences and coldness that He suffers from men in the Sacrament of His love; and though He complained that what grieved Him most was the treatment He received from some hearts consecrated to Him, yet He imposed no great sacrifices, suggested no heroic expiation, asked no victims of immolation. He taught Blessed Margaret Mary only three special ways of honoring and pleasing Him. These were, first, the Holy Hour, secondly, frequent reception of Holy Communion, particularly on Fridays, and lastly, the institution of a Feast in honor of His Sacred Heart. He further enjoined that on this feast a public act of reparation was to be made to

atone for the insults heaped upon Him while exposed on the altar during the Octave of Corpus Christi. Those were the only new special practices He taught her,—practices that could without great difficulty be devoutly observed by the faithful at large, as by souls specially consecrated to God. I say, they were the only new practices He suggested—for there was one other familiar way of serving Him that He never tired of impressing upon the disciple and apostle of His Sacred Heart, and that was absolute fidelity to the duties of her state of life, unconditional, unexceptional obedience to rules and precepts, careful sanctification of every daily action. Whenever His wishes and commands conflicted with those of the Mother Superior, Margaret Mary was always to obey the latter; she was to prefer the fulfillment of the slightest duty ordained by Rule, to the sacred joy of communing with Him in the Blessed Sacrament; strongly did He reprimand and punish the least infraction of discipline, even though it were committed under the false idea of sanctifying herself or giving pleasure to her divine Spouse. In this way He prepared her to instruct others and gradu-

ally to become herself a special victim of **His** love for souls.

Do we not desire to make reparation, at least for our own sins? Do we not also long to make ourselves pleasing to the Sacred Heart by discharging every debt that stands against us? And is there any one amongst us so cold, so devoid of apostolic spirit as not to wish to aid in saving the souls of his brethren? Ah, then, let us labor, first of all, to become faithful Christians, faithful observers of all the obligations of our state of life. Faithful observance of every duty implies a moral martyrdom. Many saints lived ordinary lives and never attempted extraordinary things: their aim was to do ordinary things extraordinarily well. In this wise we shall cancel many a debt, secure assistance for others and console the Heart of our Eucharistic Lord.

But is not our love generous enough to undertake a little more? Once again, who is so rich, so powerful, and withal, so good and beautiful as He? He is the fairest of the children of men, whiter than the lily, gentler than the lamb, the poorest of the poor, the lowliest of the lowly, the humblest of the humble, the Beloved who will not

break the bruised reed or extinguish the smoking flax, so patient, forbearing, running after the wayward sheep, pressing the prodigal to His Heart, yet at the same time the King of ages, the Wonderful, the Holy One, the Light of light, the Judge of the living and the dead, the Emmanuel, yea, the mighty God! He is Love itself: how can we then resist His love? What does He ask of us? First, He pleads that we will give Him entrance into our hearts in Holy Communion, that we will receive Him often. "My delight is to be with the children of men." And shall we not give Him that delight? What can be easier? Oh! how is it possible for Christians to stay away from Him for an entire year? Is He not the Bread of our souls? Where is faith, love, self-interest? Receive Him, then, often; if not oftener than at present, at least with more fervent love and more generous preparation.—What else does He ask? That we stay with Him occasionally. Can you forget the Garden of Gethsemane? Remember the complaint made to Peter. "Simon, sleepest thou? couldst thou not watch one hour?" In the Tabernacle also our Lord is alone. Few believe in Him. He is amongst His own as of yore,

and His own receive Him not. Throngs pass to and fro before His churches, giving no thought to the sacred Presence there. Men are busy with their vain occupations, they speak of projects and success and failure as if they are to live forever, yet never think of the gentle Saviour who is in their midst. He sustains them, He gives them light of understanding and warmth of heart, He fills their days with sunshine and their nights with wholesome rest, He is their God, their future Judge, their eternal bliss: but He is abandoned, as He was in the night of suffering, He is left alone with naught to keep Him company save the dim light of the modest sanctuary lamp. "Couldst *thou* not watch one hour?" "Stay with Me!" Keep vigil with Me for a little while!—Is there aught else our Lord asks of those devoted to His Heart? Yes, He asks their help in the work of saving souls. Many a human being is this moment on his death-bed. On the cot of a hospital ward, in a den of sin, on the prairies of the west, in the woods of Africa, out on the rough waves of an ocean-storm, perhaps unknown, alone, unconscious, a sinner is slowly breathing out his life. A few moments more, and all will be over for a

never-ending eternity. Oh, how many of the dying are dead in sin! how many there are whose souls are laden with ten thousand deeds of darkness! how many cold and reckless, how many struggling in despair! Shall our Lord's blood bear no ransom; shall His Heart have loved in vain; shall He be deprived of the glory that He so justly claims? Oh, pray with Him, suffer with Him. Have you the courage of love? Then offer yourself a victim to Him. Let the lamp of your life be burnt out for Him. Let sorrow darken your pathway and thorns be strewn over its sod. Let anguish of spirit be yours, since so often it was His. One day the good Master will meet you with a welcome and rest your weary head upon His bosom, and there let you be inebriated with the joy of His own living Heart.

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